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SELECT  
MEMOIRS OF PORT ROYAL.

VOL. III.

LONDON  
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SELECT

MEMOIRS OF PORT ROYAL.

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED

TOUR TO ALET

GIFT OF AN ABBESS

VISIT TO PORT ROYAL

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

&c. &c.

TAKEN FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.

BY

M. A. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

*Fifth Edition.*

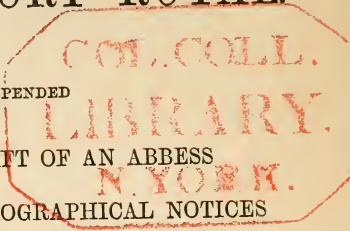
IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS, AND ROBERTS.

1858





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OF  
THE THIRD VOLUME.

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SELECT  
MEMOIRS OF PORT ROYAL.

VOL. III.

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# MEMOIRS.

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## PART II. — *Continued.*

### CHAPTER VI.

#### SERVANTS OF PORT ROYAL.

WE must not conclude this account of the destruction of Port Royal, without a brief notice of the faithful servants who were banished at the final dispersion.

Their annals are indeed brief and simple; nor do they present the same strong interest, or the same variety of incident which distinguishes the biographies of the great lights of the Port Royal school, whose noble descent, or pre-eminent talents, necessarily placed them in the foremost rank under every persecution, and upheld them as special marks for the assaults of their enemies. Nevertheless, although the absence of these worldly advantages gave less splendid relief to the virtues of these humble brethren

in the eyes of men, to the Christian reader, their lives will be, perhaps, the more interesting on this very account. He will delight to trace the workings and the all-sufficient power of divine grace, under circumstances and trials peculiar to their condition, and to contemplate its genuine effects, where there is little else but the fruits of divine grace to attract his attention. He will see the most noble constancy where no motive of human honour could ever have been suggested; the most bountiful charity bestowed at the expense of the first necessaries of life, by givers who could receive no meed of praise; and he will behold a celestial wisdom imparted from above, to those whose want of education wholly precluded them from being enlightened by human learning. In a word, in the unlearned, no less than in the learned, he will behold the same divine principle bringing forth abundantly the same good fruit.

And if the lowly graves of these unlettered saints boast no sculptured marble, and if the even tenor of their holy lives has called forth no pompous eulogium, yet not one of them is forgotten before GOD; and as they were joint partakers in the same faith, and in the same good works, with their pious and enlightened masters and instructors, so likewise in the great day of the Lord, shall they jointly receive with them, the crown of immortality, and the palm of glorious victory.



LOUIS L'EPARGNEUR was born at Thiérache. He was shoemaker at Port Royal des Champs for above ten years, and was one of the brightest examples of devotion, and of the practice of every Christian virtue. Whilst at his work, he had always the New Testament open before him, on a kind of little desk which he had contrived on purpose. In this book he was continually reading, or else repeating the Psalter, all of which he knew by heart, and his work seemed to be no hindrance to these pious and profitable exercises. Indeed he had read both these books so often, and with such deep attention, that he could repeat the whole of the New Testament by heart, nearly as well as the Psalter. Being driven from Port Royal in 1709, he retired to St. Pélagie, in the Faubourg St. Marceau, at Paris, where he continued precisely the same habits. Having joined the fraternity of cordwainers, he edified them by his exemplary piety till the time of his death, which took place the 11th of June, 1716. His remains were deposited in the burying-ground of the Holy Innocents.

PETER BOURCHIER (who being very tall, went by the name of Peter the Great) was born at Gresset, a village in Gascony. He was by trade a vine-dresser. In that humble station he performed all the duties of a real Christian. On working days he followed his occupation assiduously in the spirit of

penitence; Sundays and festivals he hallowed by regularly attending the offices of the church. He formed a little society of several piously disposed young men in his own class of life, with whom he could unite in worshipping GOD, in simplicity of heart and godly sincerity. They not only loved to hear, but to study the word of GOD, for which they had an insatiable desire, and they eagerly embraced every opportunity of hearing it. This, however, seldom occurred in their parish, as the curate had the benefit of his flock very little at heart, and never preached, so that they received no instruction, unless he was either indisposed or absent, when the priest who supplied his place, always read the gospel and preached. Under this spiritual famine, they continually prayed to GOD for grace to apply the little they did hear, and to enable them to serve Him, as far as they knew, in the true spirit of the gospel.

The conviction that the grace of GOD was sufficient for them, and that His divine power could devise means to instruct them, as it brought instruction to Cornelius of old, was the greatest consolation of Bouchier in his continual labours. His whole ambition was to become thoroughly acquainted with the gospel, and as the curate was so remiss in performing his duty, he resolved to endeavour to learn to read himself. Bouchier was then above thirty, and all his neighbours considered such an undertaking

as a piece of madness. Peter, however, was not to be deterred from making the attempt. He earnestly prayed for the blessing of GOD on his humble endeavours to become acquainted with His will, and rising some hours earlier to do his day's work, he spent the afternoon in searching out the two or three families in the village who could read, and in begging them to give him a little instruction that he might be able to read the Scriptures. As soon as Bouchier was able to decipher it a little, he began to read the gospel to his companions, and to converse with them upon it, inciting them to follow his example. All their leisure time these young vine-dressers spent in studying the scriptures; and while they followed their occupations, they contrived to work near each other, and to converse on the divine truths they had been learning; so that they lost not a single moment for instruction, and every penny they could save from their wages they gave to the poor.

Like Cornelius, their prayers and alms came up for a memorial before GOD, and it pleased Him to send them a truly apostolic and eminent servant of Christ, to break to them the bread of His holy word, and to nourish their souls fully with it. This instrument in the hand of GOD, was Father Vincent Comblat, a Cordelier, who pitying the darkness of the people, and animated by an en-

lightened zeal for his divine master, and by love for the souls of men, travelled from village to village on foot, purposely to preach and expound the gospel.

The zeal of Father Comblat, the purity of his doctrine, and above all the closeness with which he applied the Scripture, (to the exposition of which his exhortations were always confined,) soon drew down upon him many persecutions, both from false brethren of his own order, and from various other unworthy ecclesiastics.

The good providence of GOD having led this holy man to the village of Gresset, Peter Bouchier and his companions, were the most ardent to profit by this divine favour, regarding Father Vincent as the apostle sent of GOD in answer to their prayers, and his instructions as manna, of which they would not lose an atom. This excellent missionary was indeed a man of GOD. Not satisfied with expounding Scripture every morning and evening, when the labourers returned from their work, he went abroad into the fields during the day, working with them himself, and instructing the labourers during their employments.

Bouchier was so impressed by these instructions, and touched at this proof of love, that he would never quit Father Vincent, but attaching himself to his service, followed him whithersoever he went.



Peter always worked at whatever employment he was capable, in all the places where Father Vincent travelled, as indeed the good father likewise did himself, whenever he was not engaged in instructing the people. By this means, they both lived by the labour of their hands, without being burthensome to any. This disinterested conduct stamped a seal on their instructions. It edified the sincere, and caused a great number of conversions, both amongst the careless and the profligate—GOD shedding an abundant blessing upon labours so truly apostolic.

Father Vincent being obliged to go to Paris on business, did not fail to visit Port Royal des Champs. As usual, he took Peter with him. Peter no sooner entered this retreat, than he seemed to be in that new earth where righteousness and holiness shall dwell; where truth shall be known and revered; and where Christian charity shall fully prevail. Peter left Port Royal with regret, but with a hope of returning at some future period. He, however, continued to accompany his benefactor, Father Vincent, with the same zeal and fidelity till that excellent and apostolic man was interdicted from preaching, and closely confined in a convent by order of his superior, who would not even suffer his faithful companion to remain with him, or share his imprisonment.

Overcome with grief, but compelled to quit his dear master, Peter determined to follow the inclination of his heart, which led him to Port Royal. He resolved, however, first to return to Gresset, and make his intention known to his old associates; who were so much pleased with it, that many of them joined in his design. Accordingly they were all received at Port Royal with the Christian charity which so eminently characterised that holy monastery.

The care of the mill was committed to Peter, and when not employed there, he worked in the garden. In these occupations his conduct was a means of edification to the whole house.

When his daily labour was over, he occupied himself in prayer, meditation, or in studying the Holy Scriptures, upon which he frequently conversed with his companions. He referred to them, and quoted from them with so much readiness, that they appeared to have been the study of his whole life.

It would be impossible to have excelled Peter in disinterestedness. He never would receive anything from the nuns beyond his food and clothing, still less would he accept of anything from others.

One day, having succeeded in getting a stag, which the Dauphin was hunting, out of a pond, that Prince immediately presented Peter with twenty-five crowns as a recompense. Peter, however, would

on no account accept of it, but replied, "That the holy nuns he had the happiness to serve, provided for all his wants with so much Christian charity, that he wanted nothing. That Providence on whom he relied, had never forsaken him; and, that if he continued faithful to GOD, he was very sure he never should be forsaken." The officers of the Dauphin, full of admiration, continued to press him to accept the money, telling him, that if he had no occasion for it himself, he could give it to the poor. He replied, "Gentlemen, you can give it to the poor yourselves, which will be far better."

On another occasion, having been compelled to receive a liberal present from the Count of Toulouse, to whom he had done some service, Peter took it immediately to the turn at the monastery, saying, "I do not know what to do with this money, it is an encumbrance to me; lay it out in butter if you will."

He was so truly detached from worldly interests, that he never would permit the nuns of Port Royal to secure him a small pension, which they were anxious to do, foreseeing the destruction which was likely to fall on their house. The nuns having repeatedly urged him to accept it, he generously replied, "that though he was feeble and tottering, and at a very advanced age, neither the providence of GOD, nor His promises to His faithful servants,

would ever be overthrown; and this solid foundation was more secure than anything they could do for him—that his heavenly Father, who cared even for the little sparrows, and clothed the lilies of the field, would assuredly not forsake him. “The gospel itself,” he said, “was his security; and that his whole source of inquietude and anxiety, was, lest he should not be sufficiently grateful and faithful to GOD, who had bestowed such abundant, and such constant mercies upon him, especially that of having enabled him to learn to read His holy gospel, and also that of having made him known to the house of Port Royal.”

His continual recollection and humility charmed all who saw him. Whenever he approached the holy table, he took off his shoes, and drew near bare-footed, to show his profound respect for the sacred and tremendous mysteries, as they are termed by the fathers of the first and second centuries. The conduct, the countenance, and whole demeanour of this admirable man was such, that the very sight of him brought to mind those words of our Lord, “I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” These words were indeed fully accomplished in this unlettered saint.

Peter had resided nearly thirty years in Port

Royal, when the adversary of all good succeeded in the destruction of this sanctuary.

He was driven from the house in 1709, with all the other servants, when he was offered, by Mons. d'Argenson, fifty sols, (that is, twenty-five pence, English,) as a remuneration for thirty years' service. Even this contemptible sum Peter absolutely refused to touch. He retired to the house of a friend of Port Royal, who resided at Paris in the Faubourg St. Antoine. There he remained five years, pursuing the same recluse habits, and maintaining the same devotional spirit as at Port Royal.

The nuns of Notre Dame de Liésse, having expressed a strong desire to attach this excellent man to the service of their house, his kind host would not oppose it, though he considered Peter's removal as a serious loss and as a punishment for not having more abundantly profited by his example.

Peter was entertained with all the consideration and Christian charity due to his eminent piety. He occupied himself as a gardener in his new situation, working as much as his strength would allow, which, however, was but little, as he was at the time of entering the convent, above seventy-five. At the end of a few years, being wholly past labour, the nuns obtained him an admission into the hospital of incurables. Here, as ever, his Bible accompanied him. Though unable to do anything else, he occu-

plied himself in spreading the savour of the gospel of Christ amongst his brethren, edifying the whole house during a period of nearly three years that he lived there. At length he expired, full of an ardent desire to enjoy the presence of GOD, for which he had sighed so many years, and whom he had served so faithfully. He devoutly finished his race in the month of December, 1720, aged eighty years.

PETER MOLIAC (surnamed Peter the Little) should not be separated from Peter Bouchier, who was chiefly instrumental in his conversion. Both had been followers of Father Vincent, and both had enjoyed the advantage of residing at Port Royal.

At the destruction of that establishment, Peter Moliac, with two other domestics, who were also driven away, retired with Peter Bouchier to a friend's house, in the Faubourg St. Antoine; who placed him in a small dwelling he had lately purchased, adjoining the church of St. Nicholas des Champs. There he was attacked by the scurvy; and contrary to the wish of the charitable friend whose guest he was, removed to the Hôtel Dieu, in hopes of obtaining superior medical advice. Here the sisters of charity, who attended the sick, and all indeed who saw him, were greatly edified by his piety.

He died on the 25th of July, 1724, in the sentiments of a genuine Christian, whose piety had been

both founded and maintained by the constant and habitual study of the gospel.

His friend attended his funeral, and had him buried in the church-yard of the Holy Innocents.

This holy gardener left behind him a will, which is too edifying to be passed over.

We insert the principal part of it.

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“I, the undersigned, Peter Moliac, formerly under-gardener of the abbey of Port Royal des Champs, being in sound health of body and mind, and being seriously engaged in considering without delay (seeing I am at so advanced an age) the account which I must so shortly give at the judgment seat of Christ; I therefore commit to writing this my last will and testament, consecrating it to the glory of the most holy and adorable Trinity, one only true GOD, in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with an earnest desire to be with Jesus Christ, and through Jesus Christ, the worshipper of this ineffable mystery.

“I offer to the majesty of GOD my bodily death, as one part of the wages of sin; but which, through His grace, shall make an end of all the fruits of sin in me for ever. I likewise submit to the just sentence of Divine Providence, the place, the time, the



hour, and the manner of my death, however severe and painful it may be.

“Prostrate in heart and in spirit at the feet of my Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ my GOD and my Judge; I condemn already all that He will condemn in me; I am overwhelmed with the unspeakable gifts of His grace. Let Him not enter into judgment with His servant for my many abuses of them, but let Him remember that He has freely remitted all, for the glory of His grace, in the work of my redemption.

“I supplicate, in particular, all those holy persons, who have, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, been sanctified in the same religious house, where the goodness of GOD led me for instruction and for edification, by so many bright examples, that they would unite with me in prayer \*, that, *by the alone merits and passion* of the Son of GOD, Jesus Christ our Lord, I may obtain the pardon of my sins, and a blessed entrance into life eternal, and the society of the blessed in the courts above.

“If at the time of my death, I owe anything to any person, I desire it may be paid, as well as my funeral expenses. I give to the poor, as the fruits of

\* “De s’unir à moi, pour obténir de la clémence de notre bon DIEU, par les mérites et la passion de son Fils, notre Sauveur, le pardon de mes péchés, et la vie éternelle dans la société des bien-heureux.”



my labour, whatever money may be found to belong to me; likewise my effects, books, linen, clothes, and generally whatever I have to give, that the value of all may be devoted to GOD, and to the most urgent wants of the poor, according to the judgment of the person to whom I entrust the execution of my will. What, however, I *wish* is that the total value of the property I leave, however small it may be, should be entirely laid out in the purchase of New Testaments, to be distributed gratuitously throughout the kingdom, wherever they may be thought necessary for the instruction and consolation of the poor. If a part could be sent into the diocese of Bazas, of which I am a native, it would gratify my inclination; but this I altogether leave to the discretion of my executor. These are my last desires, and I revoke every other will I may have made.

“ I have no more to add, but to beseech our Lord Jesus Christ to receive my soul into His peace, patiently awaiting His coming. Even so quickly come, Lord Jesus.”

“ Done at Paris, 14th January, 1723.

“ PETER MOLIAE.”

LEONARD FOURNIER was born on the 20th of May, 1664, at Bauvrai, on the Loire, in the diocese of Tours. Immersed in ignorance, and educated amongst persons of the most corrupt manners,

it can only be ascribed to a peculiar providence of GOD, that amidst so many temptations, and with so few helps, he never fell into any acts of outward immorality.

At an age when children are often abandoned to their own evil passions, and to the examples of corrupt associates, Leonard had the fear of GOD continually before his eyes, and sought faithfully to regard what he then knew of the divine law.

He honoured his parents, obeyed them, and submitted to them, without ever departing from the respect due to parents from children. And although their tempers were perverse, and they not only showed him little kindness, but even treated him very ill, he paid them uniform deference, both in word and deed, continually bearing and forbearing. Convinced that the blessing of fathers established the houses of children, he sometimes threw himself at his father's feet, entreating him in the name of GOD to bless him. Leonard was the only one of his family who assisted his father in his latter years, and he always considered this favour of GOD as the source of all those he afterwards received through His divine mercy.

When Leonard had attained the age of thirty, his family urged him to marry, and had even provided a suitable match; but when his engagement was on the point of being concluded, Leonard suddenly

adopted the resolution to devote himself to a single life, that his affections might be undivided, and that he might be solely engaged in doing what was pleasing to Christ.

In consequence of this resolution, he determined to withdraw from the temptation offered him, and to abandon his native place. He sold what little he had, and distributed the money, amounting to about five hundred livres, amongst the poor.

He reserved to himself only one single penny for his journey, and meeting with a poor man he gave away even that. Thus, if Leonard did not, like St. Paulina, forsake great riches, he, like the apostles, forsook all he had to follow Christ; and, like the widow in the gospel, gave out of his penury even all his living.

Released from the incumbrance of the cares of this world, in order to follow Christ more freely—having, like Abraham, left his country and his kindred, not knowing whither he went, yet trusting, that GOD would bring him to a land He would show him—he resolved to walk before GOD, and be perfect, and with singleness of purpose to seek that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is GOD. Leonard, like Jacob, met an angel to comfort and strengthen him by the way. A man habited like a peasant accosted him, and accompanied him for some distance as a fellow traveller, talking to him of GOD

in so affecting a manner, that the heart of Leonard burnt within him. Hitherto, Leonard had rather walked by the *spirit* of faith than by a clear discernment of the *object* of faith. He believed indeed that GOD is, and was assured that He is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek Him; but still he was unacquainted with the manner in which alone the mercy of GOD can be extended to man. He knew very little about the scheme of redemption, and had very confused and inadequate notions of what Christ does in His atonement *for* man, and by His Spirit *in* man. This, which Leonard wanted, his new companion preached to him. He taught him who already believed in GOD, to believe also in Christ. He instructed him in the mystery of Christ, and how to obtain the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit; and after defraying his expenses at the inn where they arrived at night, left him, without Leonard's perceiving what was become of him.

Leonard was led by divine providence to Beaugenci, where he arrived on the 29th of May, in the year 1700, on Whitsun-eve. He passed the night under a shed, and on the following morning he attended church and presented himself amongst the other communicants to receive the sacrament. It so happened that Leonard was observed by a woman whom he had accidentally met the evening before, and whom he had seen in a violent passion, in con-

sequence of which he had represented to her, that it was a very bad preparation for receiving the sacrament. The woman was so exasperated at this rebuke, that, on seeing Leonard at church the next day, she went to the Prior, and informed him, that the stranger was not sufficiently sound in mind to receive the holy Eucharist. Without farther inquiry, the Prior passed him twice; but having observed the recollection, modesty, and humility, with which he bore this affront, the Prior sent for him after mass was over, to have some conversation with him, when he was completely undeceived. Amongst other questions, the Prior asked Leonard, what he thought of his refusal? Leonard replied, that it had humbled him before GOD, knowing himself to be a great sinner, and highly unworthy of so great a favour. The Prior was so pleased with his discourse, that when he dismissed him, he gave him a penny, which Leonard immediately divided with the poor, only reserving half of it for his dinner. He remained some time at Beaugenci, where the same Prior employed him to make a terrace. When the work was finished, Leonard refused to receive anything for it, saying, it was enough to have had his food. On the Prior insisting that he must receive his wages, Leonard asked him to give him *as an alms*, a shirt, and money enough to purchase a sickle, to work for poor persons, who might not be able to

pay a reaper. His first essay in this benevolent scheme, was made in favour of a poor widow, of the parish of Crevan, where his patience was fully put to the test by the very untoward temper of her son. Leonard was, however, amply recompensed for the vexation this circumstance occasioned him, by the friendship which he formed with Francis Compagnon, a young vine-dresser, of the village of Paule, in the diocese of Orleans. Francis was possessed of great piety and enlightened religious knowledge, and though very young, had already been instrumental in drawing a great number of persons to the service of God, by inspiring them with a desire of studying His Holy Word, and by assembling them in companies to read the New Testament to them. It was equally striking and edifying to see the manner of life of these poor and illiterate, but pious and zealous young labourers.

Nothing could more nearly approach to the piety, the simplicity, and fervent faith of the primitive Christian church. They fasted regularly, although employed in the arduous labours of agriculture. But that which was most remarkably edifying in this little society of peasants, was their perfect harmony and Christian charity, and their continual and assiduous study of the Holy Scriptures. This alone formed their rest and relaxation in the intervals of labour; and it was truly delightful to see these



young vine-dressers, in the midst of their vines, with the New Testament in their hands, and the villagers and children gathered around them, listening with earnest attention and clasped hands to the Word of Life which was read to them.

Such was the new friend whom Leonard met with at the poor widow's, engaged in the same charitable occupation with himself.

Francis Compagnon immediately began by teaching Leonard to read, and placing him under the direction of Father Gabaret, a pious and venerable minister of Pamiers. He also introduced him to the service of Pierre Fleuri, a farmer who was his intimate friend, in the parish of Poilly. In this family Leonard found great spiritual benefit and assistance. Prayer, and the perusal of a considerable portion of Scripture, was practised in the house, morning and evening, and when they assembled at dinner. Fleuri treated Leonard as his brother, whilst Leonard obeyed his master with the utmost respect, in simplicity of heart, as rendering service to the Lord.

Every Saturday evening, after Leonard had finished his work, he went to the house of his friend, Francis Compagnon, where he spent the night; and early next morning, in company with the young men already spoken of, proceeded to a town about a league distant, where M. Pacori, at five in the morning, delivered an exposition of some passage of

Scripture; and when the lecture was concluded they returned together to Paule, to high mass. After vespers, Leonard attended the Scripture reading and instruction, which his friend, Francis Compagnon, gave at his own house.

Such was the life Leonard pursued till May 1704, when Madame de Fontpertuis, who was acquainted with his piety, proposed to him to establish himself at the monastery of Port Royal des Champs, in the capacity of gardener. Leonard accepted the offer with delight and thankfulness, and his faithful friend, Francis Compagnon, determined to conduct him there himself. Here Leonard employed all his leisure time in prayer, and in reading the Scriptures, but as he read very imperfectly, and with great difficulty, whenever he met any one decently dressed, the poor man would go up to them, and pull out his New Testament, which he always carried about with him carefully wrapped up, and beg them, for the love of GOD, to read him something in it; whilst he, in the mean time, would listen on his knees, with the greatest sentiments of love and reverence for the Word of GOD, and always expressed the most lively gratitude to those who had the kindness to read to him.

Leonard endeavoured assiduously to put in practice all the instructions he received in Port Royal, and to profit by the examples of eminent piety he saw



in that holy house. Being driven from this seclusion in October, 1709, he after a short time returned to Paule, to rejoin his dear friend, Francis Compagnon, from whom he had been separated six years. Compagnon rejoiced to see him again, and Leonard was soon comfortably reinstated in the service of his old master Peter Fleuri. He had scarcely however resumed his labours, when he was taken ill with a fever, and although he soon recovered, it was an illness peculiarly grievous to him, since it precluded his attending the last illness of his dear friend Francis Compagnon, and deprived him of the consolation of receiving his last farewell.

Francis Compagnon died on the 19th of August, 1710, in his thirty-sixth year. His death was as triumphant as might have been expected from the holiness of his life. His humility was so unfeigned, that he did not believe there was a greater sinner upon earth than himself. The faith and courage of his pious and venerable mother, at the time of his death, was a spectacle truly worthy of admiration, and melted the very hardest hearts. It drew tears from the eyes of every one who had been attracted to the dying scene, by the well-known piety of Francis Compagnon. This excellent mother might be compared, for constancy and resolution under so severe a trial, to the mother of the Maccabees, or those of Symphoria and Melithon.

After exhorting and comforting her dear son, to the last moment, with the most touching tenderness, and with all the fervency and loving confidence of a lively faith, accompanying him to the very confines of eternity; and having watched his last breath, she, with her own hands, closed his eyes; and when the solemn pause of all present, had sufficiently ascertained that he was really dead, she threw herself on her knees; and raising her hands and eyes to heaven, exclaimed, "It is true, O Lord, that I lose a saint, but it was from Thee I received him. O give me grace to restore him to Thee freely at Thy will, and to rejoice for *him*, rather than to mourn for *myself*." Such were the noble sentiments with which religion had inspired this poor woman—poor! nay, but rich in faith and blessed among mothers.

The following year, after the death of Francis Compagnon, Leonard was received as head-gardener of the abbey of Voisins, in the diocese of Orleans. Here he remained during the succeeding twenty-five years of his life a pattern to all, for piety, uniformity, and regularity of conduct. His spirituality and fervour indeed constantly increased. He was heard at prayer at almost all hours of the night, by those who accidentally happened to pass his chamber door, for he was in the habit of always praying aloud; and, as he slept in a remote part of the house, apart from the rest of the family, he

imagined he could not be overheard. He devoted Sundays more particularly to this exercise; the whole of which, as well as holy days, he spent in church, which he only quitted to take his meals.

On other days, he employed his time after dinner, while his fellow labourers were sleeping, in prayer and in reading the Scriptures. Even his labour did not suspend his devotional exercises, as every natural object seemed only to recall his heart to GOD; and every manifestation of the power and goodness of GOD in the works of nature, was to him a lively type of the infinitely greater wonders He had wrought by the power of His grace.

As labour was no hindrance to prayer, in the case of this excellent man; so prayer sanctified his labour, without intermitting it. He was often known to refuse the permission offered him, to attend part of the service on working days. On these occasions, Leonard would excuse himself, by saying, "that labour was the penance which GOD Himself had imposed upon man; and that it was therefore a principal part of our submission to GOD, to labour diligently, assiduously, and cheerfully." He was indeed deeply impressed with the sentence, which condemns man to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow; and found great pleasure and edification in those passages of Scripture, which contain exhortations or promises to those who labour with fidelity.

The maxims of Port Royal on this subject, were deeply engraven upon his heart. “After you have finished reading the Scriptures,” said the Mère Agnès, addressing her nuns, “take up your outward occupations, and pass from one of these employments to the other, with equal affection and complacency, knowing that every employment is sanctified by the will of GOD: that His will gives an equal sanction to each, and therefore ought to render each equally agreeable to you; and in proportion as you are truly devoted to Him, you will be without choice. For all the outward practice of religion may be included under three heads, and all three have respect to GOD. First, there are those which are purely spiritual, as prayer, attending divine service, &c. Secondly, instruction in which the end is spiritual, but the means are addressed to the understanding and heart, as in reading Scripture, hearing discourse, &c. Thirdly, all outward occupation and labour. Now, in the first set of duties, we speak to GOD; in the second, He speaks to us; and in the third, we serve and obey Him, and the order He has established, in the person of our neighbour. Instruction teaches what we ought to do; prayer obtains the enabling grace to do it; and outward works are the fruit and visible accomplishment of both one and the other. Neither then can be safely neglected; all are equally necessary to the Christian.”

The diligent toil of Leonard, did not prevent his constant practice of the most rigid self-denial, and in proportion to his austerity towards himself, he was always tender and compassionate to his neighbours. He was constantly ready to take upon himself, that which was most toilsome and laborious, in order to relieve others; and equally ready to excuse the defects, or bear with the ill humour, of those with whom he had to do; and was so indifferent to the world, that it was as difficult at Voisins, to obtain his consent to their maintaining him for life, as at Port Royal.

The eminent virtues which distinguished this excellent man, he owed, in a great measure, to the assiduous reading and perusal of the New Testament. He had, at length entirely overcome the difficulties of learning to read, by the constant perusal of this one book, and he had found in its sacred pages, the living bread of the soul. He there found Christ. He there listened to His words with respect and attention. Leonard had indeed received, in a high degree, the understanding of the words of eternal life; he treasured them in his heart to be the rule of his conduct; from them he learnt the holiness of religion, the dignity and duties of a Christian, and the greatness of the rewards prepared by the Lord, for those who truly love Him; and when he spoke

of them, it was with raptures that can hardly be expressed.

The remembrance of Port Royal remained deeply engraven on his heart. About half an hour before he died, when he was speechless, the name of Port Royal which he heard pronounced, seemed to revive his strength; and raising his hands to heaven, he gave signs of that profound veneration he always expressed for that holy community.

At length the moment arrived when it pleased the Lord to call his faithful servant from works to rewards. After five days' illness, during which he was constantly occupied with thoughts of GOD, and the desire to be with Him, he expired on the 20th of June, 1736, aged sixty-seven years.

The majesty of his countenance, after death, was most striking; it excited awe and respect in all who beheld it. His eyes re-opened, and preserved their wonted vivacity and mildness. Those who were present at his death, and who had been edified by his life, testified their affectionate attachment to him by their eagerness to have something which had belonged to him to keep in his remembrance. He was buried at the lower end of the church, near the grate, on the very spot where he usually placed himself when he offered to GOD his fervent prayers, and which he had so often watered with tears.



## CHAP. VII.

## M. DE ST. CLAUDE.—CONCLUSION.

TO this brief account of the domestics, who were driven away at the destruction of Port Royal, we shall add a sketch of the life of one of the recluses of the later period, who deserves a place in this history, from his inviolable attachment to Port Royal; for the numerous and unremitting services he rendered the nuns, and also for the very large share he had in their sufferings.

We allude to M. Le Noir de St. Claude, who died in the odour of sanctity, on the 30th of December, 1742, at the advanced age of eighty years, after having survived all the nuns, and almost all the recluses.

M. de St. Claude was one of those men beloved of GOD, who are raised up to bestow upon the church, eminent examples of piety, and of constancy under persecution. In his early youth, he, like his predecessor, M. le Maître, was distinguished at the bar; but at the age of thirty-three, he suddenly

quitted it, to devote himself to a life of retirement, solitude and piety, in the vale of Port Royal.

In this seclusion his life was, indeed, that of a perfect recluse. He rose at two o'clock every morning, and went to matins, when he stayed some hours in the church, and then betook himself to his occupations without returning to bed.

By this means, he was enabled to devote many hours to prayer, meditation, and especially to the study of the Holy Scriptures, before most persons were awake. The time which was not so employed, he spent in receiving the numerous guests who visited Port Royal; in presiding over the distribution of the alms bestowed by the house; in visiting the poor at their own homes, or in manual labour.

Humility, sweetness, and a something inexpressibly delicate, noble, and touching, which was visible in all his actions, countenance, and demeanour, soon discovered him to be far beyond what his external appearance, that of a simple domestic, indicated. His piety possessed, in a peculiar degree, the characteristics of gentleness and perfect uniformity; so that by seeing him once, you might know what he was every day of his life; and indeed, we may truly say, that it was sufficient to know the lives of the first recluses of this holy solitude, to be perfectly acquainted with that of M. de St. Claude, during the twelve years he spent at Port Royal, enjoying



the peaceful and tranquil delights of silence, prayer, and humiliation.

In the year 1707, he was obliged, in some degree, to exercise his former function of advocate, in defence of the nuns of Port Royal. When he had occasion to visit Paris, in the service of the monastery, he was not ashamed to appear there in his usual peasant's dress.

One day, the nuns having desired him to consult their advocate, who was one of the first in the profession, M. de St. Claude presented himself at his door, in his waggoner's frock, gaiters, and staff. The advocate was then in his anti-chamber, taking leave of some company who were going away, and whom he had re-conducted to the outer door. M. de St. Claude waited till they were gone, when, after paying his compliments, he began to speak of the business upon which he came to consult him.

The advocate, who was in extensive practice, was not of a humour to allow his time to be wasted by listening to the tedious, irrelevant details of that class of persons, whose ignorance renders them wholly incapable of explaining their affairs with clearness. He therefore abruptly interrupted him, and stopped him short, by asking him at once for the nuns' memorial. M. de St. Claude replied, that he had none, but that he was thoroughly acquainted

with the business, if he would have the goodness to give him a hearing.

“ Well, well,” replied the advocate, still standing in the antechamber, “ we shall see ; now let us hear the question, and above all, my good man, keep to the point.”

The rustic orator then opened the business, and explained himself so well, that he was requested to walk in, and, continuing his exordium, the advocate perfectly surprised and satisfied, begged him to come into his study. At length more and more astonished, as the supposed peasant proceeded, at the precision and exactness of his relation, and at the clearness with which he developed all the intricacies of the business, he desired him to sit down ; and having heard to the end, dismissed him, with a polite assurance that he would pay every attention to the business, and requesting him to present his compliments to the community.

M. de St. Claude slept that night at Paris, at the house of his brother, the canon ; and stayed the next day, at his brother’s earnest request, to meet a party of their mutual friends at dinner.

The advocate whom he had consulted the day before, happened to be amongst the number.

On taking their seats at the dinner-table, the advocate perceived his client, and was not a little surprised at seeing the supposed errand-man of Port

Royal seat himself with the company, but he was still more astonished, when the Abbé le Noir, on taking his wine, saluted him, "Your health, my dear brother." "How," said the advocate, "is this gentleman your brother? I have then many apologies to make to him for the ill reception he met with at my house yesterday." He then related the adventure of the day before, to the great entertainment of the company.

The Jesuits, the unrelenting enemies of Port Royal, were at this time ready to give the decisive blow which fell with such fatal effect upon the objects of their jealousy and hatred; and M. de St. Claude, who manifested the greatest zeal in assisting the defenceless nuns, came in for his share in their persecutions.

The titles of the abbey of Port Royal were deposited in his hands; and in order to obtain possession of them, the Jesuits caused him to be seized, with all his papers, and conveyed to the Bastille, where he was confined till the death of Louis the Fourteenth, that is, above seven years, from the period of his detention.

To a recluse like M. de St. Claude, this captivity was merely changing the place of his solitude. His piety and spiritual joy seemed to increase with his misfortunes; so that long before the period of his im-

prisonment had elapsed, he had acquired the respect and admiration even of his persecutors.

M. de St. Claude's time was not less fully employed in the dungeons of the Bastille, than in the seclusion of Port Royal. He devoted himself so assiduously to the study of the Scriptures, and to prayer and meditation, and laboured so perseveringly for the spiritual well-being of his fellow prisoners, that he scarcely gave himself the necessary rest which nature requires, and very often only laid down his head for a little sleep, without going to bed. It is, indeed, so literally true that he had not a moment unappropriated, that when M. d'Argenson, (then lieutenant of the police) gave him permission to walk every day, for an hour, in the court, and on the terraces, M. de St. Claude thanked him for the indulgence, but told him he had not sufficient leisure to profit by it, and in fact, he never once made use of this permission.

M. d'Argenson was in the habit of paying frequent visits to M. de St. Claude, for whose excellence he soon conceived the highest respect; and often said, he had not only never had such a prisoner, but that M. de St. Claude was so excellent, that he did not believe the whole world contained his equal.

The following anecdote will sufficiently show, that however warm M. d'Argenson might be in his praises,

his good opinion was not so exaggerated as it may seem.

At the same time that M. de St. Claude was incarcerated in the Bastille, a man was confined there of such a ferocious and brutal disposition, that no one durst approach him. He never spoke but his words were accompanied by a volley of oaths and blasphemies, and he struck any one who approached him with the most phrenetic violence. Every means had been resorted to, in order to humanize this monster, but in vain; when the governor proposed to M. de St. Claude to undertake this apparently most hopeless task. He at first excused himself through humility, but on the governor's insisting with many entreaties, the pious captive said, "that if he *ordered* him to make the attempt, he would obey him, considering him as the superior in whose hands Providence had then placed him."

The governor, who, as has been observed, entertained the same high respect for M. de St. Claude, which he inspired in every one who knew him, at once assented to the condition, and assuming for the occasion the authority of a superior, commanded M. de St. Claude to make the attempt.

The humble saint was accordingly shut up with this human brute. He was greeted, as might have been expected, by his fellow prisoner, who exhausted his ferocity upon him in revilings, in blows, and in

yet more savage tokens of the barbarity of his disposition. This outrageous treatment continued, until the desperate ruffian was completely exhausted; silence, patience, and mildness, were the only defensive weapons of the man of GOD. His prayers achieved the rest. At length the monster looking into the face of M. de St. Claude, and seeing the love and patient benignity of its expression still unruffled, suddenly threw himself at his feet, and embracing them, burst into a flood of tears.

When he had recovered his voice sufficiently to speak, he expressed the utmost abhorrence of himself, and the highest veneration for M. de St. Claude, beseeching his forgiveness in the most humble terms, and imploring M. de St. Claude to teach him that religion, which had enabled him to endure, with such patience, the brutal indignities he had inflicted upon him.

M. de St. Claude raised his penitent from his knees, and embracing him with tears, spent the chief portion of his time in instructing and comforting him, and in showing him the necessity of an entire and thorough conversion. Nor was his instruction vain. His companion became an entirely altered character and gave the more remarkable evidence of the power of divine grace, by becoming not only decidedly pious, but mild, gentle, cheerful, and resigned, nor did he think he could ever do too much



to show his affection and gratitude to his saintly benefactor.

Scarcely was he established in his conversion, when an order came for his liberation ; but such was his attachment to M. de St. Claude, that the governor found it impossible to prevail upon him to quit his prison. M. d'Argenson was, therefore, obliged to have recourse once more to his pious captive, who represented to his convert, that the will of GOD being manifested by this order, he ought to comply with it ; and that after having received the talent of grace in solitude, he ought, since GOD called him, to go and use it amongst his fellow men, to the glory of GOD who had given it to him.

With great sorrow the prisoner yielded to these representations of M. de St. Claude, who consoled him a little by promising to correspond with him, and by recommending him to the care of his brother, M. l'Abbé le Noir.

Besides the Abbé le Noir, the Canon of Notre Dame, M. de St. Claude had another brother\*, M. le Noir du Roule, who, at the commencement of the last century, was deputed by Louis the Fourteenth, upon an embassy to the Emperor of Ethiopia, and who was massacred on his journey by the King of Sennaar.

\* M. du Roule is mentioned very particularly in Bruce's Travels. Also in Father Lobo's account of Abyssinia.

At the accession of Louis the Fifteenth, M. de St. Claude, being liberated, in common with all those who were detained on religious grounds, went to reside at the house of his brother, the Abbé le Noir, who, as well as himself, was also strongly attached to Port Royal.

After the death of his brother, M. de St. Claude resided many years in the college of Laon, with a pious and venerable old man, who attended M. Arnauld in his latter years. This valuable friend he also lost, and in addition to which, he had the misfortune to become totally blind. His eyes having been so much weakened by the dampness of his prison, that at the period of his liberation, though not much above forty years of age, he could only perceive the largest objects, and could scarcely see sufficiently to walk about the streets in safety.

Under these circumstances, M. de St. Claude withdrew into retirement. The bias of his own mind had always led him to a secluded life, and he had now an ample opportunity of indulging it.

Prayer, and listening to the perusal of the Scriptures, or works of piety, were his chief occupations; and, in order to render himself as useful as possible to his fellow men, he not only relieved the temporal necessities of the poor, but continually purchased pious books to distribute amongst them. But the enemy of souls — ever ready to stir up the evil



passions of his agents and to incite them to persecute the children of GOD — soon found means to interrupt this good work. The house of M. de St. Claude was visited by the police, and not only were all the books intended for the poor carried off, (though printed with the royal privilege and approbation) but a very considerable part of his own excellent and valuable library was seized. Thus was he deprived of the only outward resource left him; nevertheless, trying as these malicious persecutions were, they became the means of exemplifying the promise, that all things shall work together for good, to those who truly love GOD. His life seemed daily to become more entirely hid in Christ, and an almost angelic spirituality beamed in his countenance. He seldom appeared but when he went to church; his regular attendance on which was never interrupted to the very last day of his life; and as he walked to and from the house of God, he was always occupied in reciting the psalms, all of which he knew by heart, as well as the New Testament, and when at church, he edified the faithful by his deep and inward devotion, being penetrated alike with a sense of the greatness and majesty of GOD, and of his own nothingness.

Humility was the grand principle of M. de St. Claude's predilection for evangelical poverty. He denied himself in everything to give to the poor.

It was his maxim not to intrench upon his fortune, which he left entire to his relations, but to expend his whole income without any reserve. He employed his wealth in good works, supporting the indigent, especially those who suffered for the truth, and assisting the nuns both of Port Royal, and of some other convents of that neighbourhood, where GOD was served in spirit and in truth.

M. de St. Claude distributed the greater part of his charities through the medium of an excellent and aged maiden lady of great piety, who informed herself in detail of the wants and necessities of worthy people. When he carried his alms to her, it was not a petty sum, but a purse of louis. His love of self-denial, and his charity towards the poor, taught him to retrench in the most necessary expenses. He dressed like a simple mechanic, and as his attendant and companion had only a little boy to lead him as he walked in the streets, and to read to him at home after he became blind.

M. de St. Claude was a strictly self-denying christian, yet, without the adoption of any extraordinary singularities; a frugal and abstemious style of living, fasts performed according to the ancient discipline of the church, and prayer at midnight in the church, constituted the whole of his ascetic observances.

The privilege of prayer he availed himself of

without ceasing. Public worship was delightful to him, nor did he ever miss it, day or night. He had one fixed place at Port Royal, and at the church of St. Étienne du Mont, which he attended at Paris, standing against one of the pillars without support; and with his eyes closed, chaunting with a loud voice. Many persons went to the church to observe him for their edification. The very sight of M. de St. Claude disposed the heart to prayer. The parishioners of St. Étienne du Mont still remember the lively example which he afforded them during the latter years of his life while he resided in that parish.

It was delightful to contemplate this truly venerable old man, with his long white hazel staff, his threadbare coat, and silver hair, placed behind the pulpit, during the whole service, and apparently immovably fixed against a pillar, which he only quitted at the communion after mass, on going into the choir, to receive it with the rest. It often happened that another parishioner, no less edifying, might be seen assisting and partaking with him in the same blessed ordinances. We speak of the Duke of Orleans, first Prince of the blood, son of the Regent, who resided in a little hermitage at the Canons regular of St. Gèneviève. It was a striking sight, to behold these two celebrated characters kneeling, side by side, at the altar. Both exhibited perfect models of piety, penitence, humility, and liberality towards the poor.

Both conceiving themselves less than the least of all and mingling indiscriminately with the other communicants, from whom they were only distinguished, the one by his white head, the other by his blue ribbon.\*

\* Louis, Duke of Orleans, son of the Regent, and first prince of the blood, was born at Versailles, August 4, 1703. He was endowed with a fine understanding and acute discernment, with peculiar talents and taste for study and literature. His youth was dissipated ; but after the death of his father, and that of his wife, he withdrew from the world ; devoting himself wholly to exercises of devotion and works of charity, as well as to the study of theology and science.

In 1730, he took an apartment in the Abbey of St. G enevi ve, which in 1742 became his sole residence. He never quitted it but to attend the council at the Palace Royal, or to pay charitable or devotional visits to hospitals or churches.

Portioning young women, affording means of education to children, and of learning a trade to youths ; founding colleges, bestowing benefactions on missionary societies, or forming new establishments, were the objects which employed this excellent and learned prince to the close of his life. He died on the 4th of February, 1752, aged forty-eight years and a half.

The queen, on hearing this mournful intelligence, said, "C'est un bienheureux qui laisse apr s lui bien des malheureux." The Duke of Orleans cultivated every species of information : he had acquired the Hebrew, Chaldean, Syriac, and Greek languages ; he was thoroughly versed in sacred, ecclesiastical, and profane history ; he was an excellent natural historian, and perfectly understood geography, botany, medicine, and painting.

A great number of his works still remain in manuscript, according to the information we derive from the Abb  L'Advocat, who enumerates the following : —

- I. Literal translations of paraphrases and commentaries on part of the Old Testament.
- II. A literal translation of the Psalms, from the original Hebrew

The public services which M. de St. Claude attended regularly, whether at Port Royal or elsewhere, formed but the smallest portion of his life of prayer; he knew the Psalter by heart, as has been already observed, and used it in prayer continually. When he was seen walking in the streets, and his blindness led him to think himself unobserved, his lips were constantly moving, as he repeated the Psalms, or prayed to himself.\*

with a paraphrase and notes. This work is one of the most complete amongst those of this pious and learned Prince. He was still engaged in it during the illness which terminated his existence; and he finished it a very short time previous to his death. It contains many learned and ingenious explanations, with sound and precise criticism, and a great number of very curious and learned dissertations.

- III. Several dissertations against the Jews, intended to be a refutation of the famous Hebrew work, the Shield of Faith. The Duke not being satisfied with the refutation of this book by Gousset, undertook the task himself, but did not live to complete it. It is very superior to that of Gousset, as far as it is gone, and is a much better answer to the difficulties started by the Jews, which he has examined and sifted thoroughly, and replied to in the most masterly manner.
- IV. A literal translation from St. Paul's Epistles, from the Greek, with a paraphrase, critical notes, and pious reflections.
- V. A treatise against theatrical amusements.
- VI. A solid refutation of the great French work, the Hexaples.
- VII. Several very curious treatises and dissertations on different subjects.—His great modesty would never permit him to be prevailed on to print any of his works.

*Voyez son article, Dictionnaire Historique.*

\* Besogne, v. pp. 155, 156, 157,—160. Clem. x. pp. 332, 333, 334. Poulain, iv. pp. 262, 263, 264, 265.

The officer who was governor of the Bastille during the seven years this servant of GOD was confined there, declared, that notwithstanding the gratification he derived from the conversation of this prisoner, he refrained from visiting him as often as he could have wished, because he had observed that whenever he went to his chamber, he was the cause of his retrenching from the time devoted to rest on the following night; as every minute consumed in conversation with the governor, was so much of the time which had been previously allotted for the performance of some religious duty; and as he would allow no portion of any kind of duty to be omitted, he encroached upon the night, to perform the service he had prescribed to himself in the day. So deep was that piety, and so exalted that christianity which found time too short even in a prison for the performance of charity and devotion.

It appears that, beside the practice of repeating the Psalms and vocal prayer, he also spent a great portion of his time in mental prayer. This was particularly the case in his old age, after he had lost his sight, and was no longer able to read. In this state he continued many years, during which he chiefly confined himself to his chamber, without any company, and there he never for a single moment knew what it was to be weary, as he used to say with his usual simplicity and frankness.



If any person paid him a visit, which did not often occur, he always addressed him cheerfully and openly, without any of that air of sadness or melancholy, usually seen in persons of unoccupied minds, and listless habits. It evidently appeared in his conversation, that he spoke of the things of GOD from the very fulness of his heart; and the fruits of his solitary meditation and prayer, proved an abundant harvest of blessings to the friends who visited him in his seclusion.

But, perhaps M. de St. Claude's most distinguishing characteristic was, his extraordinary christian charity, and spirit of peace and love. Every division amongst the friends of truth pierced him to the very heart.

M. de. St. Claude died the death of the righteous, on the 29th of December, 1742, at five o'clock in the morning. As soon as the report of his death was circulated, the concourse of people who flocked to his chamber, to behold him once more, was so great, and so continual, that it was found necessary to close the door of the house, before they could proceed with the necessary preparations for his interment.

We have now presented the reader with a faithful and circumstantial narrative of the destruction of Port Royal, and of the end of its pious inhabitants; saints, of whom the world was not worthy, and who

may so emphatically be said to have walked with GOD, in the world; to have endured as seeing Him who is invisible; and to have had this testimony that they pleased God. They all died in faith; and precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.\*

We cannot conclude these memoirs in a more satisfactory manner, than by pursuing the same strain of sentiment with which Dom Clemencet terminates the account of the servants of Port Royal; extracts from which occupy so many of the preceding pages. He thus touchingly adopts the inquiry of St. Paul.

“ And now what more shall we say? for the time would fail us to tell of all the multitudes who through faith wrought righteousness, and inherited the pro-

\* Mademoiselle Poulain terminates her valuable work in the following words: “ On ne peut mieux terminer ces vies édifiantes qu'en rapportant les propres paroles de M. Colbert, évêque de Montpellier sur Messieurs de Port Royal. ‘ Qui a rendu des services plus essentielles à l'église et à l'état que ces hommes célèbres, qu'on a voulu faire passer pour les ennemis de l'un et de l'autre? Les ouvrages qu'ils ont laissé, et dans lesquels ils ont excellé en tout genre, ont servi à donner à la France cette supériorité qui l'élève au dessus des autres nations. Si le peuple est plus instruit, la religion plus connue, le clergé plus savant; à qui en a-t-on la première et la principale obligation, si ce n'est aux travaux immenses de cette pépinière d'hommes que Dieu avait fait naître pour purifier le temple et le sanctuaire, et pour faire reflourir Israel? Que l'on examine dans tous ces corps séculiers et réguliers, qui si distinguent par une piété plus solide et plus mâle, qui sont plus versés dans les divines écritures, et l'on verra que ce sont ceux à qui les ouvrages de Port Royal sont tombés entre les mains, ou qui ont eu le bonheur d'être conduits par des maîtres qui étaient remplis de son esprit.’ ”



mises, whether in the seclusion of Port Royal itself, or in connection with that blessed institution." It would, however, be superfluous to enter into any further detail. Christian biography should both be written and read with a view to promote edification, not to stimulate curiosity. The examples of every description which have been already proposed, are amply sufficient for those who are anxious rather to reproduce their virtues in their own lives, than to recreate their minds, by the stirring incidents of their histories.

Reader, whatever be thy condition, or thy talents, thou mayest here find a model. The valley of Port Royal presents examples, from the cottage to the throne; and thou wilt behold in this seclusion, saints, at whose feet thou mayest consider it an honour to sit, — from the unlettered peasant, whose graces bloomed in her hidden retirement, to the pious and enlightened professor, whose talents and whose learning dazzled and astonished Europe.

Permit me then, whosoever thou art, to conclude, by earnestly and affectionately addressing myself to you in particular. Let me then beseech you, in the language of St. Paul, who — after speaking of the fathers, the patriarchs, and the prophets, who walked as seeing Him who is invisible, and who died in faith — emphatically adds “since then *we* also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let *us* lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so

easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of GOD.”

May we contemplate these eminent examples of Christian excellence, not with an idle and fruitless curiosity; but, as St. Austin listened to the wonders related by Pontinian, with a reverend and holy admiration! Yet let us not imagine it to be sufficient to experience a warm admiration and reverence, in contemplating the miracles which divine grace has wrought, and wrought too almost in our own days. If the bright light of Port Royal has thus shone, as it were, before our eyes, it is incumbent on us, who see its good works, to learn of the same Spirit to glorify our Father who is in heaven. For Christ is the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The Spirit is given to every man to profit withal; the love of our heavenly Father extends the same scriptures, the same grace, and the same promises, which pardoned, renewed, and sanctified their souls, equally to us. Let us not then content ourselves with merely beholding the brightness of their lives; but by the salutary light it diffuses, let us search out the inconsistencies and imperfections of our own.

If we believe we have like faith with them, let us examine ourselves, whether we be *indeed* in the faith; for the hope of the deluded and self-deceived, as well as that of the hypocrite, shall perish. A scriptural faith must not only embrace the true object, but it must be implanted by the right spirit, for no man can call Christ, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost; nor will any conviction of the understanding avail, unless the heart likewise believes unto righteousness. He alone is *in the faith*, who lives *by faith*, and whose faith is *continually operative* in works of Christian love. Let us, then, not be merely admirers of the lives, but partakers of that living faith which produced such an abundance of excellent fruits in the blessed inhabitants of Port Royal.

To what purpose is it to honour the saints of GOD with our lips, whilst we deny the faith by which they became so, by our lives? What will it avail, merely to venerate the memory of Port Royal, to speak with reverence of its departed saints, to visit its desolate site, or to shed tears over its demolished foundations and its silent ruins, if the same mind be not indeed in us which was in them?

The children of this world honour the relics of departed piety, because it no longer opposes their corruptions. They adorn and beautify the sepulchres of those prophets when dead, whom, living, they

would have been the first to persecute even unto the death.

Let us do far differently. Let us indeed venerate the memory of the excellent of the earth. — Of those who have in any degree borne the image of Christ and become living temples of his Holy Spirit. — Let us not only have the history of Port Royal painted in our memory, and its praises published by our tongues; but may its sentiments and its faith be engraven on our inmost hearts, and may its good works be reproduced day by day in our lives. Let us praise them by an adoption of their spirit, and a conformity to their conduct.

And woe be to us if we follow them not!

Every Christian exhortation, every example of the power of divine grace, is an especial messenger of GOD to our own souls, inviting us likewise to be partakers of the same mercies. Accordingly, as we receive or reject the message, it must become either the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death. It indeed sets before us life and death, the blessing and the curse. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; but that men, though having seen the light, have yet preferred darkness.

My fellow Christian reader, do not let us deceive ourselves. We cannot trifle with the calls of grace with impunity: GOD is not mocked. It is not possible to rise from the contemplation of the divine

mercies, manifested in the lives of others, in the same state in which we sat down to their consideration. We have received one more invitation to turn to GOD, and to live to GOD, and He will no more hold us guiltless, for beholding His grace, than for taking His name in vain.

We may be perfectly sure, that for every good example the mercy of GOD vouchsafes us, *in the day of grace*, His justice will require corresponding fruits *in the day of judgment*; and that every eulogium we have bestowed on virtue without following it, will only prove an additional seal to our irrevocable condemnation.

However vivid may be our sentiments of admiration for His servants, or however earnestly we may inculcate their examples among men, yet, if we stop there, we shall be found amongst those to whom the Lord will say, as He has told us He will say, to those who prophesied in His name without following Him, "Depart from me, all ye that work iniquity, I never knew you!" If we have not yet received Christ as our Saviour, what infatuation is it that we do not seek to do so, and that with our whole heart? Let us seek Him *now*, while it is yet called to-day; behold, NOW is the accepted time; behold, NOW is the day of salvation.

Reader! the examples of eminent piety which these pages propose to your imitation, are not those

of a remote age, and severed from our own by a wide dissimilarity of customs, habits, civilisation, or mental cultivation. The excellent persons whose virtues this brief memento records, belong to an age linked on to our own, not merely by proximity of time, but which in intellectual illumination, in the elegant arts, and in the depth of mental research, as well as in polished society, refinement of manners, and luxurious delicacy of habits, was precisely equal, if not perhaps superior to our own.

The seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries are perhaps chiefly distinguished from the period which has succeeded, by the supereminent growth and strength of sanctity, united with splendour of talent, which rendered conspicuous so bright and numerous a constellation of its illustrious characters. Let us not then hedge ourselves round with vain excuses; which, however they may delude our own consciences, will never stand before the touchstone of divine truth, or the tribunal of the final judge.

Reader, there is but one road to heaven — that royal road, which the prophets and patriarchs have trodden before thee — the walk of faith — the highway of holiness, in which the Lord is ever so continually present with His people, that even the fool shall not err therein. The door of entrance is Christ, who must be received as a Saviour. This is the



beginning of vital godliness; but no man can enter that door without repentance, which must be both deep and thorough; and therefore Christ has said, strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it; and He has also said *agonize* to enter the strait gate; for many shall *seek* to enter in, and shall not be able. The kingdom of heaven suffereth *violence*, and the *violent* take it by force.

Reader, whosoever thou art, however amiable thy disposition, and however irreproachable thy character before men, canst thou require a repentance less deep, or a conversion less thorough; or canst thou less need an Almighty Saviour to redeem thy lost soul, than the Arnaulds, the Sacis, the Lindos, the Fontaines; who—as far as it regarded morality and the external observances of religion—might be said to have walked, from their youth upwards, in all the commandments of the Lord blameless? Like Job, they feared GOD and eschewed evil. Yet, like him, also, their hearts were no sooner illuminated by the Spirit of GOD, than, they abhorred themselves, and repented in dust and in ashes; and the only ground of their rejoicing, like that of the venerable patriarch, was not in any good works they had done, but in the glorious truth, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” For the faith of the church, like Christ, who is its object, is essentially the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

Or, if by the grace of GOD, thou hast already experienced Christ's redeeming love; art thou more exempted from the command to keep stedfast, immovable, and always abounding in the works of the Lord, than the Remicourts, the Courtiaux, the du Valois, or the St. Claudes?

Or is the impenetrable shield of faith, which quenches the fiery darts of the wicked one, which overcomes the world, removes mountains, purifies the heart, and works by love, less necessary to thee, than to the eminent sanctity of the Marie Angélique Arnaulds, the Ninvilliers, the St. Thécle Racines, the du Fargis, and the Suireau des Anges?

If thou art indeed a branch engrafted into the true vine, dost thou imagine there is a dispensation allowing thee to be less abundant in good works, than the Issalis, the Bagnols, the Aumonts, and the Sericourts?

Nor think to plead the particularities of thy individual character or situation, the solicitations of thy early besetting sin and habitual infirmity, or the difficulties and temptations of thy peculiar circumstances, as affording any ground of exemption. The voice of inspiration expressly declares, that, with every temptation, GOD will make a way to escape; and the examples now before thee, are a few amongst the cloud of witnesses, who have proved His faithfulness, and the truth of His promises.



Examine then thine own conscience. Is thy situation elevated amongst thy fellow-mortals? Is thy seat amongst the rulers of thy people? Do the aged arise and stand before thee, and the princes refrain talking, and lay their hands on their mouths in thy presence? Does the brightness of thy name shine as a star in the firmament, and gild as with a lengthened train of lustre, even the dark and distant horizon of departed centuries?

And is this the ground on which thou allegest the bondage of thy situation: the multifarious distractions of complicated cares, and of interfering duties; the restraining shackles of society, and the irksome but obligatory servitude of external representation?

Interrogate thyself. Are thy ties more strict, or is external representation more incumbent upon thee, than upon the amiable and accomplished, as well as the humble and pious Duchess of Luynes and Liancourt, and the Princesses of Guimenée and Elbœuf? Is it more difficult to preserve humility, recollection, devotion, and self-denial, in the splendour of thy birth; than amidst the united blaze of talent, wit, beauty, and affluence, which illustrated the royalty of that of the Longuevilles and the Contis; and which were enlisted under the banner of the cross, on the throne of the Gonzagas?

Perhaps, however, thou advancest the opposite

plea, and importunately urgest the lowliness of thy fortunes. Thy lot is cast in the deep and dark valleys, or in the pit where no water is. Like thy Master, thou hast not even where to lay thy head. Thy name is unknown amongst men; thou art forgotten amongst thy people, thou art passed over, and as one dead, and out of mind amongst thy brethren; and thy name has not extended to the saints, who, if they knew, might cheer thee. Thy path is desolate and uncheered. When affliction comes upon thee as a flood, pressing down thy heart to the dust, no man cares for thy soul. When corroding sorrow eats like a canker into thy vitals, and sears with concentrated grief thy aching heart; no prophet of GOD is near to touch the rock, and bid the kindly waters flow. When strong temptations spread their nets, encompassing thee round on every side, when the pressure of dire necessity goads thee on, and the iron grasp of gaunt poverty drags thee reluctant to the abhorred toils; no Christian brother is near, to burst, in the name of Christ, the fettered bond, to bid the prisoner be free, and to lead thee to that GOD who can alone restore the fallen soul. The weary path of thy human pilgrimage is dark, and drear, and cheerless; and every slow and heavy laden step, thou must trace helpless and alone.

Nay, not alone, for GOD is with thee! He was with our great Exemplar; and He likewise dwells

with all His faithful disciples. Was He not with the Laisnés, the de la Croix, the Fais, the Fourniers, the Epargneurs, the Noiseux? They were redeemed, they were sanctified, in a state of holy poverty; they stood unmoved amidst persecution, they fought the good fight, they kept the faith; and whilst they receive the crown of victory in heaven, their bright examples are left as an inheritance to the saints of succeeding centuries, after having edified their own generation, and converted multitudes from the error of their ways, to serve the living GOD.

But, perhaps, thy temptations are far different. Thou art ranked amongst the number of the learned. It is the intensity of metaphysical or philosophical research, or the elegant entertainments of literary leisure, that exclusively occupy thee; and, with a vain show of wisdom, beguile thee of life eternal. Or in the dreams of an author's exuberant fancy, thou wastest, with aching head, the midnight lamp; thy goaded pen toils for the vain hope of instructing generations yet unborn, and the deceitful phantom of posthumous fame, allures thee by the besetting foolishness of those who profess to be wise.

But dost thou imagine these vain excuses will avail with Him, who has only given thee talents for His use; and who has expressly assured thee, He will not fail to require His own at thy hands, and that with usury? Are thy researches more abstruse, or

are thy studies more laborious and intense, or do they require more exclusive application of mind, than the Pascals? Pascal, the severity of whose studies chased away the perception of one of the most acute bodily pains, but could never make him forget the presence of his GOD. Is thy learning more profound, more extensive, or more various, than the Tillemonts, the Arnaulds, the Barcos, the St. Cyrans, the Lancelots? are thy literary pursuits more important, or more abundant, than the Quesnels, the Sacis, the Singlins, the Hamons, the Nicoles, the Mesenguys, the St. Marthes, from whose luminous and evangelical pages, successive generations of philosophers and saints delight alike to recreate the mind, and to drink the pure waters of celestial wisdom, which expand the intellect, and convert the soul?

Or is the polish of thy taste more exquisite, or the riches of thy imagination more luxuriant? Is thy genius more elevated, or is the reward which fame extends to thy acceptance, more brilliant than that of the Racines, whose monumental tablet, presented to the countless multitudes of literary and titled mourners, that from various nations fondly visited his consecrated grave, the following striking inscription.

“He, whose genius has been the theme of applause and admiration to contending courts and

nations, requests that which can alone avail him —  
YOUR PRAYERS.”

Possibly, however, thou mayest complain of the opposite hindrance, and lament that thy lot is fallen amongst the simple and the unlettered, and that thou art debarred from the consolation of refreshing thy heart by a wide acquaintance with the written experience of those saints, who are already gone to their reward; or from the advantage of having thy doubts and difficulties solved, by the labours of men of piety and learning.

Reader, if this be thy difficulty, be of good cheer. The word of truth expressly declares, “My grace is sufficient for thee;” and the page of almost contemporary biography, abundantly exemplifies that it is so. Art thou less informed than the Bouchiers, the Moliacs, and the Compagnons? Is the page of the Word of GOD less open to thee, than it was to them; and is that page less able than in the days of the apostle, to make thee truly wise unto salvation?

Nor let me conclude without addressing a word more particularly to those of the female sex.

In a civilised state of society, as the division of labour becomes progressively multiplied amongst men, so the varieties of character and pursuit, become more diversified, and more distinctly marked amongst women. And in the nineteenth century, our own sex presents, not only the important cha-

racter of the *mère de famille*, but likewise the honourable and useful occupations of conductors of public charities, of ingenious authors, and of elegant artists.

Precisely these diversities do the examples of Port Royal exhibit,—may they produce a beneficial influence on my own country-women!

May those who are placed at the heads of families, prove the blessed instruments of their conversion, after the examples of Madame le Maître, Du Fossé, and Des Anges!

May those who are widows be, as St. Paul expresses it, “widows indeed,” uniting a primitive piety, and disengagement from the world, with hospitality to the saints; using their means in the service of GOD and truth, like Madame d’Aumont, Madame Marion Arnauld, and Madame d’Espinoy des Anges!

May those who unite an extensive influence with wealth, examine whether they use it like the Longuevilles, the Luynes, the Vertus, and the Liancourts; and may those amongst my own country-women, who are called by their talents to an active sphere, emulate the bright examples of the Joncoux, the St. Christine Briquets and the Eustoquie Brégy’s, uniting Martha’s busy hand with Mary’s loving heart.

And last, but not least, let me address myself to



those whose abilities or inclinations lead them to dedicate the labours of their pen to the amusement or instruction of the public.

The vocation of an author is a serious one,—serious as it respects the writer, and serious as it respects the reader. That to which utterance has once been given, it is beyond the writer's power to recall; *so that, in another sense, it may be truly said of literary crimes, as of the sin of Esau, that no place for repentance is to be found, though it be sought carefully, and with tears.*

The successful candidates for literary celebrity have a voice, which will continue to be heard when their repentance place on earth shall know them no more; and for every idle word which that voice hath spoken shall they give an account; nor will the united applauses of all men, avail to screen them from the righteous judgment of GOD.

May they, then, enter into the retirement of their own closets, beseeching the Lord, our present Saviour, and our final judge, to try the very ground and intention of their hearts! and may my own accomplished and ingenious country-women, like the Agnès and Angélique Arnaulds, and the Angélique de St. Jeans, compose only such works, as shall diffuse real and lasting good on earth, whilst the redeemed spirit of their authors, shall be reaping its rich reward of glory in heaven!



And now, O Lord, do Thou in mercy engrave these truths, alike on the heart of the writer, and the reader of these pages. May the time bestowed upon them not have been in vain to either! Whilst they honour the remembrance of Thy Saints of Port Royal, may they look with renewed confidence to Thee, the alone giver of all their excellent gifts; and seeking a lively participation in the same faith, may all their future labour, both of body and mind, be truly hallowed unto Thee; and may we both one day rest with these blessed saints, in Thy holy presence; finding, through the merits of our common Redeemer, an abundant entrance, through grace, into Thy glorious kingdom, which has truth for its Lord, love for its lawgiver, holiness for its fruition, and eternity for its duration! Amen.

ACCOUNT OF A VISIT  
TO  
THE RUINS OF PORT ROYAL DES CHAMPS  
IN THE YEAR 1814.



ACCOUNT OF A VISIT  
TO  
THE RUINS OF PORT ROYAL DES CHAMPS  
BEING AN EXTRACT FROM MY JOURNAL TO THE CONTINENT  
OF THE 18TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1814.  
WITH  
NOTES DESCRIBING ITS ORIGINAL STATE

COMPILED FROM "LA DESCRIPTION DES BATIMENTS DE PORT ROYAL," GIVEN IN  
RACINE, HIS. ECCLES. BESOGNE, AND CLEMENCET, COMPARED WITH THE  
PLANS AND FIFTEEN VIEWS BY MADEMOISELLE HORTHEMELS.

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\* \* \* \* \* NEXT morning we set out from our uncomfortable inn at Versailles, to make our long projected visit to the remains of Port Royal des Champs, which is only about six miles further.

We soon quitted the high road, which, bordered with a magnificent avenue of trees, extends twelve miles, entering Paris through the Bois de Boulogne, the Barrière de Neuilly, the Champs Elysées, and the Place Louis Quinze, till the noble vista is terminated by the magnificent gardens, and the Royal Castle of the Tuileries.

The cross road into which we turned, leads through the valley of Port Royal, and close under the walls of the monastery, to Chêvreuse. The way, which is exceedingly rough and ill kept, rapidly ascends to a sort of flat or wold, such as those on the tabled hills of Somersetshire. Though by no means unsafe, we could proceed but slowly; and there being no avenue on each side, as on the high roads, its appearance was very dreary. Indeed, excepting where the country is well wooded, like that near Pont St. Maxence, I think every part of the north of France I have seen, has a very desolate appearance, owing to the total want of hedge-rows. Both in French Flanders and Picardy, the view extends over immense tracts of country, where neither cattle nor human habitations are to be seen; and which, from its being uninclosed, appears totally naked, though in fact it is everywhere covered with abundant crops.

This high ground and bare appearance continued nearly the whole way. We passed indeed two or three villages situated in hollows. They were surrounded by vineyards, which were the first we had seen. They have very much the same appearance as the hop grounds in Kent. On inquiry, we found these villages to be Voisins, Liancourt, and others often mentioned in the memoirs of Port Royal.

At length, the table plain over which our road had

generally extended, seemed suddenly to terminate just before us, as though we were arriving at the brow of a precipice extending across the whole plain. About a hundred yards to our right was a large old-fashioned farm house, which the coachman informed us was *Les Granges*, the former abode of the recluses. He advised us to drive there first for directions, as the descent into the valley of Port Royal was exceedingly steep; and that he was unacquainted with the roads, one of which was very unsafe, owing to the precipitous descents.

Accordingly, we turned into the cart-track which led to the house, and which was bounded by a high garden wall, till we came to a lofty archway, which having passed through, we found ourselves in the farm-yard of the celebrated *Les Granges*, the abode of the *Le Maîtres*, the *Fontaines*, the *Arnaulds*, &c.

Here were the farmer and all his men at work, and the mistress busy feeding her poultry. In a moment our carriage was surrounded by master, mistress, men, maids, dogs, pigs, hens, and turkeys, who all seemed equally amazed at the sight of a carriage in so remote a place.

They however told us, with that amenity which we found characterise the Dutch, the Flemish, and the French, that we were perfectly welcome to see the remains of Port Royal des Champs; and that if we liked to take a farm-house dinner, they would

with the greatest pleasure get us whatever their house afforded.

I must now introduce you to Les Granges. More than half of the original building, we are told, is demolished; but what is left, has yet the appearance of a very large and old-fashioned farm house, built of rough stone, and much like those I have seen in the neighbourhood of Shepton Mallet in Somersetshire.

The entrance to the house is from the farm-yard. A considerable part of the lower floor was formerly appropriated to the refectory of the recluses, but as it is now partitioned into several rooms, I could not judge of its size.

We then went up a staircase which is of brick or stone, to visit the chambers of the recluses: they are all floored with the small hexagonal tiles, which are so common in France and Flanders. We first met with them in the bed-room of Jansenius, at Louvain; and then at almost every inn, from the Hôtel de Hollande at Cambray, to Paris, and from thence on our road to Calais, as far as Amiens.

These brick floors give the bed-rooms a most forlorn appearance; and to an English traveller, form a strange contrast with the beds, the curtains and coverlets of which were frequently of silk or satin.

The physician Hamon's room was one of the first we saw. It was small, and must have been incon-



venient. The furnace, oven, mortar, and various other utensils for preparing medicines for the poor, still remained. Through this room was a little light closet, in which he used to sleep on a board, instead of a mattress. The staples which held his bookcase yet remain, as well as the alarum by which he called himself to midnight prayer.

From this room we went to those of Arnould, which are rather large, and open into each other. From the windows, which, like all the others in the house, were only the size of casements, the prospect is delightful, extending over the whole fertile valley below, to the wooded hills beyond, and including the spires of the little churches of Vaumurier and St. Lambert. Here we saw the stone table on which M. d'Andilli wrote many of the lives of the Saints; and here our kind hostess, Madame Methouard, pointed out, with much regret, the devastations of the Cossacks, who had pilfered a set of prints of Don Quixote, with which she had replaced the ecclesiastical library of Arnould.

We then visited several of the other cells; after which leaving our baggage in M. le Maître's room, where we were to dine, we set out under the auspices of Madame Methouard, by the short pathway down the steep, to the monastery; leaving our carriage, and our valet de place, Camino, to meet us near the church-yard of St. Lambert; and only

taking with us our English servant, to carry a basket and knife, which had already served us at Brederode, Louvain, Cambray, and Antwerp, to procure "*des reliques bien avérés.*"

Our way lay through the farm-yard, where a door opened upon a space, which extended under the wall, along the brow of the hill. Here we distinctly perceived there had been a terrace, where the recluses walked to meditate. On the outside, the slope towards the brow of the hill was planted at intervals with fruit-trees, and was formerly their orchard.

On reaching the verge of the steep descent, we, for the first time, beheld Port Royal. Imagine the hill forming a complete steep or precipice, extending in an amphitheatrical form, and shagged with forest trees, chiefly beech, horse and Spanish chestnut, lime and ash; and at the bottom, a beautiful level plain, watered by a brook, and terminated by an opposing range of wooded hills; in the midst, and almost directly under our feet, covered with a profusion of creepers and wild flowers, are the silent remains of the Monastery of Port Royal des Champs.\*

\* The site of the Abbey of Port Royal occupies a meadow, which forms the whole bottom of a narrow valley, surrounded completely on three sides, and partly on the fourth, by steep wooded hills. The rest opens into a cheerful and cultivated country, interspersed in the middle distance by fields, vineyards, groves, hills, and villages. From this opening to the east, a brook, about eighteen feet wide enters the valley, and after crossing the south of it at the bottom of

The view, without presenting any particular feature of magnificence, is yet one of the most

the monastic garden, it forms a large mill-pond, or lake, the dyke of which, thickly planted with forest trees, bounds the monastic wall of enclosure on the west side. Close by the lake are the mill, dove-cote, shepherd's cot, and other appendages of a like nature.

The terrace by this lake furnished Racine with the subject of his earliest poetical attempt. He describes the reflection of the dark forest trees in the water, and the singular appearance of the fish, apparently swimming amongst the branches. See *Mém. de Jean Racine*, tom. 1. pp. 24, 26, edit. Lausanne, 1747.

The monastic enclosure itself forms a long square, or parallelogram, occupying the whole of the valley, excepting the space taken up by the lake. It is surrounded by a wall, with small towers placed at intervals, so as to command each other. The whole space enclosed, occupied, we are told, about twenty-seven acres.

The inclosure is divided into two parts, the whole north divisions of which were occupied by the buildings, burying grounds, courts, and private gardens, belonging to the various edifices of the monastery, and the south division of which was appropriated to the grand garden and walks belonging to the abbey.

Each of these great divisions may be further subdivided. Taking the church as the central point of the buildings, the space extending in front of it to the north monastic wall, was appropriated to the outer courts of the monastery. The burying ground for friends, servants, or those not properly of the order; also the houses of reception for guests, and the gardens belonging to these houses. To the west of the church was the hotel Longueville, to the east the stables, granaries, poultry yard, gardener's establishment, &c. Behind the church, and between it and the gardens of the monastery, was the inner inclosure properly belonging to the nuns. Here were the cloisters, dormitories, inner burying ground, infirmary, schools, obediences, &c. &c. By this arrangement, the buildings appropriated to the nuns in no place approached the grand wall of enclosure, but were bounded on all sides by other parts of the establishment.

The garden of the monastery was likewise divided by a wall, tra-

completely beautiful it is possible to conceive. I could scarcely imagine, whilst contemplating it, that the view I was looking at was the same place which Madame de Sevigné describes as “ *Un désert affreux et tout propre à inspirer la désir de faire son salut.*” Its character, on the contrary, is singularly that of cheerfulness and elegance, though with the most perfect stillness and seclusion. Perhaps it may be, in some degree, altered from this circumstance, that formerly all the circumjacent hills were shagged with lofty forests, which would both increase their apparent altitude and darkness of colouring; whereas now, though beautifully wooded, there is a sufficiently great proportion of coppice, to give the forest trees room to expand in a broad shade, instead of forcing them to tower into tall timber trees.

At present, the style of prospect is precisely similar in character, to the valleys between the wooded hills of Sunny Side, and Colebrook Dale, in Shropshire. Each place has been made remarkable for two societies of eminently pious and beneficent inhabitants, and both are distinguished by the same class of beautiful scenery; only Port Royal possesses the additional beauty of an exquisite

versing it from east to west. The part next the abbey was properly a kitchen-garden, full of beds of vegetables and fruit-trees. The farther part, called the Solitude, or Wilderness, was planted with high forest trees, and served as a walk for the nuns.

luxuriance of vegetation, of a freshness of verdure, and of a gay variety and profusion of wild flowers, which would be vainly sought for under the capricious vicissitudes of an English climate.

Having endeavoured to give a general sketch of the site of Port Royal I must observe, that the monastery itself, is so completely destroyed, that at the distance at which we stood, the ruins of its foundations, especially as they are grown over with shrubs and field-flowers, are scarcely perceptible, except as roughening the verdant plain. Some parts, however, which were spared, instantly strike the eye. Just below us, at the foot of the hill, was the road, winding between it and the boundary wall, to the grand gothic entrance gate, which still remains entire. Close by it, to the right, is the house of the venerable M. de St. Marthe now converted into a barn. Here, also, is the little cottage of St. Theobald, who, five centuries ago, lived as a hermit in this valley; it serves, at present, as a shepherd's cot.

On the left, the road remains flanked with eight towers, built during the civil wars. Near them appears another grand gateway, which formerly led to the hotel of the duchess of Longueville. The terrace of her garden still remains elevated above the level of the valley, commanding a view over all the gardens of the monastery. The dove-cote too

yet remains, the mill also and the house of the miller, formerly the habitation of the pious Peter Bouchier, and the solid stone-work constructed by the recluses, to draw the waters from the meadow, and render the naturally marshy valley, healthy. Beyond, is the level, uninterrupted verdant plain, that formerly was the garden of the nuns; and still farther, the beautiful brook which divides the valley. In front of the place where we stood, and just at the foot of the opposing wooded hill, is a sort of amphitheatre hollowed out; it is carpeted with turf, and formed with rude stone-work, like a grotto: it is overshadowed by the wide umbrage of the forest trees around, and above; and the remains of long stone seats, show where the nuns of Port Royal used formerly to work together, and to hold their conference. This place was called the desert; and many remaining pathways leading from it, and branching off in different directions, through the wooded side of the hill, still mark *la solitude*, where the nuns used to walk for the purposes of refreshment or meditation. All else is so completely ruined and demolished, that unless we had taken the plans and drawings, we could not possibly have distinguished the various parts of the buildings, although the foundations are to be traced with the greatest ease in every part.

The woods round Port Royal are, on every side, most luxuriant, and serve as a retreat for a great



abundance of game. Far to the left of the desert, and the range of wooded hills in which it is situated, the valley opens, as I have before described, into a most beautiful and rich country, gay with woods, vineyards, hills, and farm houses, and tufted with groves; amongst which arises the spire of the little church of St. Lambert, and by it, peeping through the trees, the house of Tillemont.

The road to Chèvreuse here crosses the valley, winding between tall avenues of trees, in the most picturesque manner; and having by a sudden turn to the left, quitted the wall of the monastery, it appears only in the middle distance, when the bright tints of the dresses of the country people passing to and fro, were just glimpsed between the tall stems of the trees; and animated, without in the least disturbing, the perfect stillness of the scene.

After contemplating the view for some time, we prepared to descend the hill, to take a nearer, and more detailed view of the ruins. Accordingly, we began cautiously to descend the steep, by a rude zigzag path, or track, which is, however, so precipitous, that it is by no means easy to keep a firm footing, even by holding the boughs of the trees and shrubs through which it winds. As we were going down, Madame Methouard told me, that these woods were formerly reserved for the game of the abbess of Port Royal.



It is reported, that Henry the Fourth, being on a hunting excursion in the neighbourhood, some of the young nobility of his court came one morning to make an idle visit at the monastery, when the little abbess M. Angélique, being then eleven years old, came down at the head of all her nuns, with her crosier in her hand, and turned them all out of the monastic precincts, at which the king was so delighted, that he came to the brow of the hill, saying, "*il faut que je baise les mains à Madame la petite Abbesse,*" which he accordingly did very respectfully.

On reaching the bottom of the hill we found ourselves in the private road, formerly bordered by an avenue, which turns out of the Chèvreuse road, and runs between the foot of the hill and the north monastery wall, to the abbey-door. This is a noble Gothic gate-way, of the style of the thirteenth century. On the right was a door for foot passengers. In front is a little plain, where the poor used to assemble to receive food and alms. The traces of the stone benches yet remain. Of this spot Madame Horthemel's view is a very exact representation. Near this, originally, was the porter's lodge, and rooms for the servants, but of these no traces but the foundations remain.

On passing under this archway, we found ourselves in what was the grand outer\* court of the

\* The external court of the monastery extended itself from east to

monastery, which was formerly interspersed with trees, and was bounded in front by the church, and

west, being much broader from side to side, than it was long from north to south. The principal entrance gate was in the north wall, almost in the angle which it forms with the west wall, and near the dyke of the lake. It was a fine old Gothic gateway. On the right was a door for foot passengers; above it and on each side, were apartments appropriated to the porter, and other servants. The porter's lodge was termed the guard room. Immediately adjoining to it, was a wash-house, two shoemakers' and curriers' shops, and a large storehouse for leather.

The west of the great court, or the right on entering, was occupied by the dove-cote, the house of St. Theobald, the houses of M. de St. Marthe, and other confessors of Port Royal; a large infirmary, and halls for servants. The space under the roof of these buildings was appropriated to granaries: they all had gardens attached to them, and there were also various offices, which contained the wine-presses, vats, cooperage, &c., and laundries.

The south side of the court, or that in front, on entering, was occupied by the church, with the refectories for strangers, on the left, and a building for parlours on the right, whence a wall extended as far as the dove-cote, with a door leading to the inner court. The stranger's refectory was a handsome building, three stories high, with ten windows in each row. The turn and first *tourière's* apartments and garden were also attached to this building. The church was very large, being eight windows in length; and the principal entrance was by the north transept, which projected into the court. The building appropriated to the parlours of St. Dennis, St. Austin, St. Peter and Paul, and St. Michael, also formed a similar and corresponding projection; and a low wall, drawn from one to the other, inclosed the external burying-ground, which thus was a narrow strip of ground, cut off from the outer court, and parallel to the side of the church.

The north of the court, or the side of the entrance gate, was occupied on the right by carpenters' shops, smiths' forges, locksmiths, and three large stables, all with corn-lofts; and on the left, opposite the church, was a noble range of buildings, for the reception of

the saloons for the reception of guests staying at Port Royal; on the side next the lake, by laundries,

guests, who made retreats at the monastery. One part of the building was appropriated to men, the other to women, each having a distinct entrance, staircase, and servants. The whole was four stories high, having twelve fine windows in a row, and a beautiful garden behind, extending to the north wall of enclosure of the monastery.

The east side of the outer court, or the left side on entering, was bounded by a low wall, separating it from the establishment of the duchess of Longueville.

The whole court was turfed, and interspersed with fine forest trees, — a venerable and wide-spreading ash-tree, in the centre, was peculiarly cited for its size and beauty.

The church of Port Royal, which was turned to the east, had been built at the beginning of the 13th century, and dedicated on the 25th of June, 1239, under the pontificate of Gregory the Ninth. It was built in the shape of a cross, and the style of architecture was light Gothic, with slender shafted pillars, lancet-shaped windows and high pointed arches like Salisbury Cathedral. The high altar was to the east, and behind it was the turn of the sacristy. The nave was the choir of the nuns. The south transept was closed, and contained the chapter house and the novitiate. The north transept which projected into the external court, was the grand entrance of the church from without, and over the door was a magnificent painted glass window.

Only the north transept and north aisle were appropriated to visitors, the rest was within the monastic grate.

Over the high altar stood the fine painting of the Last Supper, by Philippe Champagne, who was one of the disciples of Port Royal, and whose daughter had taken the veil there. On the demolition of Port Royal des Champs, it was placed in the choir of the nuns of Port Royal de Paris, and is now in the collection of the Louvre, where it holds a distinguished place amongst the paintings of the Flemish school, for its fine execution and its rich and harmonious colouring; but it is chiefly interesting, as containing, under the characters of the twelve apostles, capital portraits of the most cele-

carpenters', locksmiths', glaziers', and shoe-makers' work shops, with three large stables, all which latter

brated amongst the recluses of Port Royal. St. John has been recognised as the portrait of Antoine le Maitre. Le Maitre de Saci, his brother, is depicted in the figure of the apostle behind Judas. The figure whose hands are clasped together, and who is standing behind Le Maitre, is Arnauld D'Andilly ; the figure in the corner of the picture presents a capital portrait of Pascal ; Nicole and the great Arnauld are likewise in the group. Champagne painted three pictures of this design. One of them of small dimensions is in the Luxembourg gallery. On each side of the altar-piece was a fine picture, on one side the Virgin, and on the other St. John the Baptist. The altar itself, and the balustrade of wood which inclosed it, were beautifully carved, as likewise the four wooden candlesticks and crucifix, which were its only decorations. Opposite the high altar on each side the grate, were two doors leading into the choir, which were called the doors of the sacrament, because through these doors it was taken to be administered to the sick. Over each of these doors was a fine picture : one of Christ as the Good Shepherd, bringing back the lost sheep on His shoulders, and treading on thorns ; and on the other a nun crowned with thorns praying, standing before a crucifix.

The nuns' choir was remarkable for the beauty of its architecture, and for the elegance and highly-finished decorations and carving of the nuns' stalls. The choir chairs of the nuns especially were superb. They cost, in 1555, the sum of one thousand two hundred and eighty livres, when Jeanne de la Fin, the second abbess of that name, purchased them for the choir. At the destruction of Port Royal, they were purchased much below their value by the Bernardines. Indeed, the magnificence with which the whole of the church was fitted up, was the work of the same lady, one of the former abbesses of Port Royal. She presided over the monastery in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and had very considerably extended the domain of her abbey, augmented its revenues, and adorned its interior. She was buried in the choir, and at the end of

had workmen's and servants' rooms above, and extensive granaries over all. Besides which, in one

her epitaph was placed by way of motto, and according to the punning genius of the age, the common adage,

“*LA FIN couronne l'œuvre.*”

Nearly the whole floor of the church was covered with tumular stones of black marble, or lozenges of the same, for the abbesses. The eloquence of the epitaphs of Port Royal is well known; they were mostly from the eloquent and classic pens of MM. Hamon or Dodart. Amongst the most remarkable persons interred in the church, were Arnauld D'Andilly, Varet St. Marthe, Du Chemin, Du Gué de Bagnols, La Potherie, Saci, Duc de Ponchâteau, Innocent Fai, &c.

A very few years ago was found amongst a heap of rubbish at Magny, the tumular stone of the learned, polite, and pious Arnauld D'Andilly: it bore this short but touching inscription:—

“*Sub sole vanitas; supra solem veritas.*”

In the north aisle of the church was a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and a door out of it led to the external burying-ground, which lay under the side of the church, between the transept of St. Laurence at the one end, and the parlours at the other, and it was cut off from the outer court by a low wall uniting their projections.

Here were buried the servants, and many of the recluses and friends of Port Royal; amongst others, Racine, the poet. A cross stood in the centre, and the graves were marked by crosses or slabs of black marble. Above the portal of entrance to this burying-ground, were the following inscriptions: without,

“*Time is yet before thee.*”

within,

“*Time is for ever behind thee.*”

A quaint verse in old French was also often repeated;

“*Tous ces morts ont vécu, toi qui vis, tu mourras;  
Ce jour terrible approche, et tu n'y penses pas:*”

corner was a large infirmary for the servants, and the house and garden of the confessor.

The whole is now one level plain of turf, scattered with occasional ruins, and regular traces of foundations; but so very little remains, that with the exception of the buildings I before mentioned, they are generally speaking, I should imagine, not above eighteen inches high, except in some few places, where they were about as high as my head, as I stood by them.

Some way to the left of the entrance, extends a long range of ruined foundations, which, on consult-

which might be thus rendered :

“These dead once liv’d, and thou who liv’st shalt die.  
Thou heed’st it not, yet that dread day draws nigh.”

A sun-dial too was placed in the burying-ground, bearing the inscription,

“Loquor, sed non cæcis.”

The chapter-house has been already mentioned, as having been formed in the south transept of the church. It was a Gothic building, supported by one beautiful light pillar in the centre, and very much resembling that at Salisbury. It contained several fine pictures of great artists. Amongst others was one of the Miracle de la Sainte Epine, by Champagne; that operated on his own daughter by the intercession of the Mère Agnès, and which is now to be seen in the Louvre. There was also a very celebrated picture of the Mère Angélique, sitting by the side of a table, on which was a portrait of M. de St. Cyran, and giving the book of the Constitutions of Port Royal to the Mère Agnès, who was kneeling.

There were also pictures of St. Bennet and St. Bernard, and several admirable portraits of the MM. Angélique, Agnès, Angélique de St. Jean, Suireau des Anges, &c. &c.



ing the description of the buildings of Port Royal, by Besogne, Clemencet, and Racine, and comparing them with Madame Horthemel's plans and drawings, is, I find, the long range of buildings appropriated to guests, which were divided into separate houses for men and women, and which had a very pretty garden behind it, extending as far as the wall of the monastery, and a solitude, or planted seclusion for meditation on one side. Nothing of all this is now perceptible. The whole is one green meadow, the verdure of which is most beautiful, and enamelled with a thousand different field-flowers, which, as you crush them, exhale the richest perfume; and the ruins themselves are covered with a rich profusion of the most beautiful creeping plants.

After crossing what was the grand entrance court, (and it is by no means an inconsiderable distance) we came to what was formerly the site of the church.

Nothing of the church now remains but one vast pile of ruins extending on either side, festooned with the most beautiful and fragrant wild flowers, whose vivid tints gleamed intermixed with brambles, thistles, and nettles. The goats were browsing on the shrubs which grew amidst the neglected ruins, and sheep were lying down under the lower arcades which in several places just here remain entire.

Although the whole is so demolished, that none of these ruins I imagine can be above six or seven



feet high, yet amidst the heaps of stones and rubbish lying about them, we often traced the heads of angels, or rich pieces of gothic fret-work, or broken columns or capitals, peeping out under the rich profusion of wild flowers which covered them, and which so completely mantle the ruins, that at some distance it would not be easy at once to distinguish them.

Cattle were quietly grazing on the green expanse of what was once the church. At the farther end, where once the high altar stood, is now a spreading walnut-tree, under whose wide shade we stood for some time, contemplating the scene of ruin before us; like the countenance of death in the righteous, its aspect was hallowed and beaming peacefulness amidst the stillness and silence of desolation.

Yet a few paces farther was the choir, where the nuns of Port Royal performed the continual service of the Holy Sacrament, and where the ecclesiastics and abbesses of the monastery were interred. There, rising in the midst of a pile of shapeless ruins, a picturesque and aged weeping willow bends its silvery foliage over the graves.

On one of the rude stones beneath, some visitor probably, has deeply but rudely scratched with a knife, the words: "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered thee, O Zion."

The yellow lichen was beginning to deface some of the letters of this inscription, and many years are probably now passed by, since the individual who wrote it has rejoined the saints he mourns.

Immediately behind the church, which formed one side of the square, were the cloisters \* and burying-

\* Immediately behind the south wall of the church, which formed one side of a square, were the cloisters, and ranges of buildings, forming an extensive quadrangle, inclosing in its area the internal or nuns' burying-ground. These buildings were from two to four stories high, and each side was about two hundred feet in length. On the lower floor were included the nuns' refectory, the scholars' refectory, the infirmaries' refectory, the common work-room and the school-room. Above were the dormitories. Each dormitory contained a passage about ten feet wide, and one hundred paces long; and on each side were doors opening into cells ten royal feet wide, and six deep. There were forty cells in each dormitory, twenty on each side. Both the second and third floors were so occupied. Above all, in the roofs, which were beautifully finished, were various store-rooms, drying-rooms for linen, &c. &c.

The refectory was a very noble room. It had six large windows looking to the east, and four very large ones at the south end.

The ceiling was supported by a colonnade of five pillars; on each of which were inscriptions as follows. Upon the

1st — My meat is, to do the will of Him that sent me.

(On the reverse,) Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life.

2nd — The bread of God is He who descended from heaven, and who gives life unto the world.

Reverse — Blessed is he who shall eat of that bread in the kingdom of God.

3rd — Blessed are they who have been called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb.

Reverse — Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

ground: at present grass and bright field-flowers cover the whole expanse, yet the unevenness of the

4th — Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you.

Reverse — Godliness with contentment is great gain.

There was nothing on the fifth pillar, but there were texts of scripture hung all around the walls. The refectory was furnished with six dining tables, two along each side, and one across each end, with wooden benches. And between the third and fourth windows, was a high pulpit, from which the scriptures were read during meal times.

All the buildings above mentioned surrounded the cloisters, the space in the centre of which was occupied by the nuns' burying-ground.

The cloisters, which were directly behind the church, were unglazed, and about twenty royal feet in width. They consisted of ten arcades on the side next the church and the opposite side, and of thirteen arcades on the two others. Hence they were about sixty paces long one way, and seventy-four the other. The burying-ground of the nuns in the centre was turfed, and was divided into four compartments by two crossing flagged walks. In the centre was erected a large wooden crucifix, upon steps of stone. A number of little crosses marked the nuns' graves. It was chiefly in this burying-ground, under the cloisters, in the church and chapter-house, as well as in the external burying-ground, that were placed the celebrated monumental inscriptions of Port Royal. In the centres of the arcades of the cloisters between the pillars, were the following inscriptions: —

(They were written in embossed letters, and painted black.)

1st — Riches are the ruin of religious houses; but poverty, when evangelical, edifies and preserves them.

2nd — He who perseveres to the end shall be saved.

3rd — In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.

4th — We have been buried with Christ in baptism, that we might die unto sin: so that as He is risen from the dead, by the power of His Father, we might also walk in newness of life.

ground still records the barbarous exhumation of 1711, and the remains of the stone cross in the centre is covered with the names of pilgrims who had visited the spot.

Many of the bodies of the saints of Port Royal no doubt yet remain undisturbed. At the time the new dormitory and cloisters were built, the pavements of the church and the burying-ground were raised nine feet. All the bodies which were interred previously to this time probably yet remain there. Amongst them it is supposed must be included those of the Duchess de Luynes, and of M. de Sericourt.

The church of Port Royal was not absolutely destroyed till some time after the general demolition. Its tower was standing till very lately. A very few years ago it fell, and some of its fragments

5th — Many are called, but few are chosen.

Such was the disposition of the cloisters, burying ground, and dormitories. Behind the east end of the church were the kitchens, opening into a court surrounded by their respective offices, sculleries, wash-houses, woodstacks, larders, dairies, bake-houses, poultry-yards, chandlery, weaving-rooms, &c. &c. Behind the west end of the church was a court, surrounded by the infirmary, a long range of buildings on the south, and on the other sides by store-houses for glass, and for drugs : the surgery, the apothecaries' shop, the laboratory, the conservatory, the fruiterie, &c. &c. There was also a large place for faggot-stacks to supply the infirmary, and this court was well turfed, and planted, with excellent dry walks, and a raised terrace for invalids.

struck the earth with such force as to discover the lid of a coffin.

On being opened, it was found to contain the body of a priest in perfect preservation, arrayed in his sacerdotal vestments. No inscription disclosed his name, but the heavenly peace that sat on his countenance, marked him as one of the worthies of Port Royal.

Continuing our walk straight forward, over the former garden of the monastery, which was of a very considerable extent, we came to the beautiful stream which intersects it, and which formerly divided the kitchen, herb, and fruit gardens, from what was termed the solitude; which being removed beyond it, was at a sufficient distance from the monastery to form a place of retirement, where the nuns used to walk and meditate.

The solitude was formerly planted thickly with forest trees, which after extending over the remainder of the meadow, also covered the hills bounding the valley beyond. Formerly, the stream was beautifully clear, and a little bridge over it led to the desert; but, at present, it is in some places choked with flags and reeds, or mantled by the most beautiful aquatic plants; amongst the profusion of which, I particularly remarked the *Par-nassia Palustris*. The long grass which fringes its banks, was exquisitely luxuriant and beautiful,

growing to a height I never had seen before; and a number of wild water-fowl, especially moor-hens and dabchicks, were diving and sporting amongst the reeds.

Not very far beyond this stream arose the precipitous hills of the opposite boundary of the valley, covered with forest trees.

Just at their foot was situated the desert I mentioned before; and at this distance we distinctly discerned the rustic amphitheatre, partly natural and partly rudely shaped by art, which was formed in the surrounding rocks, and thickly sheltered by trees. Here the nuns repaired in the afternoon, in summer, to work and hold their conference.

An ascent of rude stone steps formerly led to the top of this amphitheatre, which was surmounted by a stone cross, from whence paths diverged through the woods up the hill, in various directions. The nuns sat to work on stone benches below. A few vestiges of the stone seats, and of the cross, yet remain.

We only saw this from the side of the stream on which we stood; but we did not go to it, as there was no bridge on which we could cross.

Having gained the utmost attainable verge of the site of the monastic inclosure, we determined, as we had entered on the right side, to return by the left, that we might see as much as possible.



We accordingly varied our course, and after crossing a considerable space, we came to a long range of low arcades, extending to a considerable depth, under a lofty platform above. These were so grown over with brushwood and forest trees, and so festooned with clematis and other creeping plants, that I at first took them for natural cavities in a ledge of limestone rock; but on consulting the map I found them to be the arches supporting the terrace of Madame la Duchesse de Longueville's garden.\*

The establishment of Madame de Longueville occupied the whole of the left side of Port Royal, as far as the buildings extended.

The thick plantations, and trees at the foot of

\* The Hotel Longueville occupied the angle formed by the north and east walls of inclosure, extending from thence parallel with the grand entrance court to the church. The access was from the exterior, on the border of the Chevreuse road, by a large Gothic gateway, corresponding pretty nearly with the grand entrance door of the monastery. The establishment of the Duchess of Longueville consisted of a large entrance court, surrounded by her stables and offices, and an inner court, or turfed lawn, on the left of which was her palace, a handsome building, with two wings for her attendants. Adjoining was a very elegant but small house, belonging to her friend, Madame des Vertus; and in an angle formed by the junction of her house with that of the Duchess, was a glazed covered way, extending across the lawn to the tribune of these ladies, near the high altar of the church of Port Royal. Behind their houses, as far as the outer wall of inclosure, were a fine garden, a solitude or wilderness, and a raised terrace planted with a double avenue of trees, and decorated with flower beds, which commanded a full view of the monastic gardens, and that part of the inclosure belonging to the nuns.



the terrace, rendered the space just below an agreeable walk to the nuns; and the arcades running very deep under it, and being furnished with seats, answered the purpose of cells for meditation to those in the garden below.

Near this place, oozing from a rocky bed, and entirely inclosed with venerable and aged trees, gushes a cool and limpid fountain: it is called the fountain of the M. Angélique; and close by its side are the remains of the stone seat, which was her favourite place of retirement and of prayer.

This sacred spot, where the trees, interweaving their branches above, form a thick gloom, and where no sound is heard but the gurgling of the water, was peculiarly striking.

Thence we continued skirting along under the side of Madame de Longueville's terrace. The trees and brushwood, which, I conclude, once formed regular avenues above and below it, now spread their branches, hoary and rough, with grey lichens, in every rude and fantastic form; and amidst the rubbish and weeds, many of the gay garden-flowers and shrubs that once decorated this lovely spot, are yet to be seen running wild, and spreading, in uncultivated and rich profusion, over the desolation.

Myrtles, lilacs, and roses, flourish amidst the briony, clematis, brambles, and nettles; the Portugal laurel spreads over the ruined archways; and

the delicate, but frail blossom of the gum cistus, scatters its snowy showers amidst the dark ivy, or the rough fern and maiden hair, that streams from the creviced stone-work, or yet upholds the tottering walls.

As it was in the month of September we visited Port Royal, these flowers were not then all in blossom; but we gathered several twigs of the lilacs, and of the rose trees.

On reaching the entrance of the Hotel Longueville, we came out through the great gate, into the Chevreuse road, where we had ordered our carriage and *valet-de-place* to meet us. Instead, however, of ascending the hill to Les Granges, we determined to return on foot, by the outside wall of the monastery, to examine the towers built during the civil wars; and then to go on, in the carriage, to the church of St. Lambert, to visit the place where the remains were interred after the general exhumation.

We accordingly set out, ordering the carriage to follow us; and Madame Methouard quitted us, to go back to Les Granges, to prepare us a dinner against our return.

Pursuing the Chevreuse road, from its entrance into the valley of Port Royal, towards St. Lambert, we had, on our left, the hills which immediately rose from the deep hollow way, thickly wooded with

forest trees. The Spanish chestnut, beech, ash, and birch trees, were peculiarly picturesque, from their age and the variety and brightness of the tints of their foliage.

We saw, amongst the woods, numbers of squirrels, chasing each other round the trees, and leaping from bough to bough; and likewise partridges, rabbits, and hares; of which latter we saw some about the ruins.

To our right hand was the grand inclosure wall of the monastery, flanked with its eight towers, built by the recluses during the period of the civil war. They must have been a perfect defence to the valley of Port Royal, as they completely command the defile of entrance.

About half way, I should suppose, down the wall of monastic inclosure, beyond the site of the buildings, and some way down the garden, the valley opens to the left; and our road wound round the bases of the hills into a cheerful country, gay with vineyards, and enriched with woods. The road, after it here quits the walls of Port Royal, is most beautiful. It is bordered all the way, in the French style, with avenues of high trees, which are so trained as to rise into lofty colonnades, leaving a clear view between the stems, (the variety of whose tints is very beautiful,) and forming a light and verdant canopy of shade above.

On our left arose the wooded hills, no longer precipitous, as in the defile between them, but rising in a long and gradual slope; and on our right, the broad brook which traverses the garden of Port Royal wound around their bases close by the road side.

I cannot describe the extreme beauty and luxuriance of the vegetation. The wild roses, orchis, woodbines, the long grass in full flower, the *Parnassia Palustris*, with an innumerable quantity of other flowers, decorated the whole of the way; and though each singly is often to be met with in our own country, yet, both in brightness of tints, in growth, in fragrance, and in the lavish profusion with which they adorn every step, the wild flowers here far exceed everything which is to be seen even in the most beautiful and sheltered spots in the south of England.

Our road now took another turn to the right; and quitting the hill, strikes across the wide and cultivated vale towards Chevreuse. The beauty of the bold sweep which the road makes in this place, is not to be described; and the gay coloured dresses of the country people and villagers, who are seen passing to and fro between the tall stems of the trees, have a very lively and pleasing effect. On the gradual slope of ascent, on the opposite side of the valley, a little to the left, out of the road to Chev-

reuse, stands the little church of St. Lambert, completely embossed in trees.

Close to it on the left, as you enter the churchyard, stands the house formerly occupied by the celebrated Tillemont. It is placed like an English parsonage. It is a neat stone country-house, with five windows in a row in front, and a very pleasant garden.

The church of St. Lambert is anything but magnificent. It is one of the smallest I ever saw. I should imagine it to be, perhaps, about the size of Radipole church, near Weymouth; or Charlcombe, near Bath.

It is situated about half way up the wide, sloping, and cultured hill; and I rather think the churchyard itself, but if not, the spot contiguous, commands a cheerful view of all the narrow valley of Port Royal, and of the river or brook, for it is only about eighteen feet wide.

The door being open, we entered the church, which is remarkable for nothing but its shabbiness. We found, however, by the high altar, another altar, which was taken from Port Royal at the time of its demolition.

Its construction is rude, and the figures are in bad taste, and have been much mutilated during the times of terror. After searching for some time amongst the grass and nettles, with which the churchyard is overgrown, we discovered the four stones

which mark the wide pit or grave in which were interred the mangled remains of the saints of Port Royal.

Amongst the number of excellent persons whose remains were cast here, in one general mass, Hamon was particularly distinguished by talents and piety. Hamon might be termed, like St. Luke, at once the evangelist and the physician of the disciples. Well known both in the literary and professional world, by his various productions, both on subjects of biblical criticism, by his moral and spiritual essays, and by the elegant Latinity and eloquence of the celebrated epitaphs of Port Royal. He only devoted the hours stolen from his repose to literary pursuits. The day was spent in the gratuitous exercise of his profession of physician, in which he had attained the first eminence, both in Paris, and in the estimation of the court. His charity was so ardent, that he deprived himself of fire, and, comparatively speaking, of food, in order to extend his bounties to the poor. For two and twenty years, he subsisted on nothing but the bran bread made for the dogs of Port Royal, and water, in order that he might have his daily portion of food to distribute among the poor.

He every day walked above twenty miles, without having broken his fast, to visit the sick, carrying food and medicine with his own hands; and that he might not lose a moment, he always carried

with him a New Testament, which he had acquired the habit of reading as he walked; so that he was at once a physician to the souls and bodies of his patients.

The recluse who has recorded his life, and composed his epitaph, concludes by observing, "He entered into eternal life the 22nd of February, 1687, aged 69, occupied in the contemplation of the mercies of our Lord, and with his heart and mind fixed on Christ, the Mediator between GOD and man."

Many of the epitaphs composed by Messrs. Hamon and Dodart are recorded in the *Nécrologe*, and several of them in the general histories of Port Royal.

I must here observe, that, remote as the little church of St. Lambert appears, we were by no means the first who visited it. Since the destruction of Port Royal, it has always been esteemed a consecrated spot, and during the summer season, the ruins of Port Royal have constantly attracted numbers of visitors, from the piety of the devout, or the curiosity of the learned.

Port Royal is still held in such veneration, that on the second of November, (*All Souls' Day*), and on the twenty-ninth of October, (the anniversary of its dispersion), there are multitudes of persons who have "*la dévotion*" to visit this consecrated spot;



and many of them make, what is termed, the pilgrimage of Port Royal. That is, they take a regular tour, divided into ten or twelve stations, of all the places most remarkable as the scenes of the lives, or deaths, or burial-places of the Port Royalists; and at each they spend some time in prayer, meditation, or other devotional exercises. A book, indeed, is published, entitled, “ *Manuel du Pèlerinage de Port Royal* ;” it was written by the Abbé Gazagnes. This little volume begins by a calendar of the deaths and places of burial of all the Port Royalists. It then lays down the plan of the stations, forming a complete guide to those, whom curiosity or devotion may lead to take this little tour. It mentions for what each station is distinguished, and then gives a ritual of psalms, or meditations, which may be appropriately used at each. They are generally beautiful selections from Scripture, and contain not only most pathetic anthems on the destruction of Port Royal, but very striking prayers for their persecutors.

Among these stations, which begin at Port Royal de Paris, and terminate at Port Royal des Champs, are several places we visited; as Port Royal de Paris, where the M. Angélique and Suireau des Anges are buried; the church of St. Etienne du Mont, where Pascal did lie; and the church of St. Jacques du Haut-pas, where we visited the tomb of

M. de St. Cyran, and saw the chapel which, before the revolution, contained the remains of Madame de Longueville.

Many other stations, however, are included in the tour; as Palaiseau, Magni, la Ferté Milon, and several others: so that the whole pilgrimage would probably occupy about a week.

The country people, whose parents benefited by the piety or charity of Port Royal, are particularly assiduous and devout in visiting its ruins, and the common grave of their benefactors at St. Lambert. We were told, that both in the October which completed the century of its destruction, and on that of the remarkably hard winter two years ago, many aged people were seen kneeling, and some of them for hours, with their white locks exposed to a pouring rain, both amongst the ruins of Port Royal, and on the site of the interment, in the church of St. Lambert.

Having in some measure satisfied our sympathies, we began to feel the fatigue of walking several hours; we therefore got into the carriage which had followed us, and went back to Les Granges\*, where

\* The following description of Les Granges is given by the historians of Port Royal.

“On the height of Port Royal, between the north and west, is a large farm called Les Granges, which is one of the dependencies of this abbey. It was originally built simply as a farm. This place consists of a large yard, containing about three acres. It had four

Madame Methouard had prepared us a very comfortable dinner in M. le Maitre's room.

On our road from Port Royal to St. Lambert, I forgot to mention the chateau of Vaumurier, the mansion erected at Port Royal by the Duke and Duchess of Luynes. He resided there a considerable time, collecting around him a society of the most pious and learned ecclesiastics, the result of

large doorways: one of which was the entrance from the road, another opened into the garden, the third led to the lake or river below, which was abundantly stocked with fish. There was also another door for the vintage. A small door led immediately down the steep to the abbey church. The farmyard of Les Granges was surrounded by various buildings. On one side was the long range occupied by the recluses, and behind was their garden and orchard. Another was occupied by kitchens, store-houses, granaries, stables for forty cows, and folds for four hundred sheep; likewise shops for smiths, wheelwrights, shoemakers, also wine and cider presses. Poultry-yards, hayricks, faggots, stacks, &c. and cider cellars, capable of containing eight hundred hogsheads. There is also accommodation for a very considerable number of carts and waggons. Near the garden was an orchard of five acres. In the centre, is a large well, twenty-seven toises deep. The machinery, contrived by Pascal, enables a child of twelve years old, at once to draw up and let down two buckets, one full, the other empty, each capable of holding nine ordinary bucketsfull.

“All the land of the abbey of Port Royal is thus valued; three hundred and sixty acres of arable land, in one single piece on the north; twenty-seven acres in the valley, on which is the site of the monastery; eight hundred acres of coppice wood and timber, in one piece at the south and west; one hundred acres of wood in the valley, twenty-five acres of the same in the park of Vaumurier; and forty-five acres of meadow-land in a piece; in all, one thousand three hundred and fifty-two acres. Port Royal had Seignorial rights, and held courts of ‘moienne et basse justice.’”

whose conferences was the excellent translation of the New Testament, known by the name of the Mons translation.

The Duke of Luynes, after the death of his first wife, made a present of this chateau to Port Royal, where it afterwards served as a house of reception to strangers visiting the monastery. This edifice, as has been before stated, was destroyed by the M. Angélique de St. Jean, who preferred demolishing it, rather than granting it to the Dauphin, who wished to apply it to an unworthy purpose.

The ruins of the mansion are yet to be seen. It was a square house, surrounded in the time of the civil wars with deep ditches, which yet remain; all round their high embankments extend thick hedges of lilac, intermingled with vines running wild over them, and which still produce excellent grapes. The kitchens and cellars still exist, but we had no time to examine the ruins closely.

After dinner, Madame Methouard gave us an excellent dessert of very fine fruit; the most valuable part of which, in our eyes, was a plate of pears from a tree planted by Arnauld d'Andilly, and some peaches planted by Pascal. Having finished our repast, we again went out into the farm-yard of Les Granges, to see the celebrated well dug in the midst of it under Pascal's direction. This well is twenty-seven French toises in depth; and draws up the water

from the level of the valley of Port Royal below. The curiosity consisted in the machinery contrived by Pascal, and executed under his direction; by which a child of ten years old could, with the greatest facility, immediately draw up a quantity of water, equal to nine common buckets.

Pascal's well stands exactly in the middle of the farm-yard of Les Granges, just opposite the door of the house; but it is not discernible to those unacquainted with it, because it has been completely surrounded by piles of fire-wood, faggots, and haystacks. This has been done to prevent accidents, as the Cossacks, during their abode at Port Royal, broke down the wall, which formerly guarded the top: the machine for drawing the water has ceased to exist for some years.

On one side of the farm-yard remains a sort of dismantled hovel, or seed-house, the remains of a cell which Pascal used as a study, and where he was accustomed to retire during his visits at Port Royal, when he wished to be in perfect and uninterrupted solitude.

We then visited the garden behind the house, which was formerly that of the recluses. It is very spacious, surrounded by a high wall, and planted with abundance of fruit trees. Here and there are arranged little green arbours, which served as places of retirement and meditation to the recluses during

their work. This place is something between a kitchen-garden and an orchard. Amongst the fruit trees, we saw several of a great age, completely covered with moss and lichen, and of which only a very few branches still bore any fruit. These were planted by the hands of Arnauld d'Andilly. Three of them only still bore fruit; but the others, though completely withered, are left untouched, and fenced round, out of respect to the memory of the saints of Port Royal. "They are holy trees," said Madame Methouard.

From the garden, we visited what was formerly the orchard of the recluses, whence we took our farewell view of the ruins of Port Royal.

Scarcely an hour after quitting the demolitions of Port Royal, we again passed on our way back to Paris, the palace of Versailles, now desolated like it, where the decree for that demolition was signed. And on the second day after we had visited the scene of the barbarous exhumations of Port Royal, we stood upon the spot at St. Denis\*, WHERE THE

\* On our return we visited the Abbey of St. Denis, where workmen were at that time employed in restoring and repairing the dilapidations the Church had suffered at the revolution. On walking up the choir we observed an open door through which appeared a little mound of earth planted with flowers, inclosed within a low boundary of stone, about a foot high, and perfectly square. The person who attended us to show the church, observing we were attracted by it, remarked to us, that it was formed when the royal



ASHES OF THAT SOVEREIGN WHO ORDERED IT, WERE TORN FROM THEIR LONG SEPULTURE, AND WITH A LIKE FEROCITY, SCATTERED TO THE WINDS, a just retribution from GOD! but which, however, does not lessen the awful criminality of its brutal perpetrators!

At the ruins of Port Royal, our reception was in the adjacent seclusion of Le Maitre and Saci; at the desolated palace of Versailles, our inn was also an adjoining appendage,—the house of Madame de Pompadour.

We will institute no comparison between the associations excited by the remains of the sanctuary of the *Pascals* and the *Tillemonts*, and those of the superb palace of that sovereign who destroyed it.

The saints who worshipped in the one, and the sovereigns who amused themselves in the other, have long since appeared before the tribunal of the supreme Judge. They have long passed away from the brief stage of mortality; and are alike numbered amongst the things that *were*. The blandishments of affection or adulation are gone, and the severe

vaults were emptied to make use of the lead coffins, and has since had the marks of respect bestowed on it which we noticed, viz. : the planting, inclosing, &c. &c. ; but that which struck us most impressively, was its similarity in size to the place in the churchyard of St. Lambert, formed by the exhumations from Port Royal. The disgusting details of the exhumation at St. Denis, may be found in the second volume of *Monumens François*, Notes, p. cvi.

LAMBERT SCHIMMELPENNINCK.



integrity of history is begun. To each, nothing now remains but an unalterable sentence in eternity, and an indelibly fixed reputation in time.

On both has equally passed the awful stamp of death. Death, which unalterably pronounces on the reputation on earth, as on the soul in the world of spirits, that solemn sentence: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

Within almost the short distance of a walk, the remains of the palace of Versailles, and of the monastery of Port Royal present examples; the first of which has often been cited as an instance of the madness of the people; and the latter as a monument of the grinding and oppressive tyranny, by which that ungovernable madness was at length provoked. To the Christian spectator, both inculcate the same lesson; that absolute power, by whomsoever exercised, when unsanctified by religion, is only a potent engine, by which man out of the abundance of a corrupt and unregenerate heart, does evil, and that continually.

The monastery of Port Royal, and the palace of Versailles, are silent and desolate: but the dismantled walls of the former are crowded with the names of frequent visitors rudely scratched: texts of scripture,

and benedictory verses meet the eye in every direction ; and at a distance of a century, its remote pathways are worn by the feet of pilgrims, who still turn out of their way to view its hallowed remains.

*“ Precious, in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.”*

M. A. SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

Bristol, December 30th, 1815.

J'ai cru qu'il feroit peut-être plaisir au lecteur, de pouvoir comparer les dogmes du Jansénisme sur la grâce efficace, avec ceux des Calvinistes : c'est pourquoi j'insère ici leur explication des cinq propositions du Père Cornet.

MARIE ANNE SCHIMMELPENNINCK.

## LES CINQ PROPOSITIONS,

*Dans les sens que nous \* les entendons et que nous les défendons.*

### PREMIÈRE.

QUELQUES commandemens de DIEU sont impossibles à quelques justes qui veulent et qui s'efforcent foiblement et imparfaitement, selon l'étendue des forces qu'ils ont en eux, lesquelles sont petites et foibles. C'est-à-dire qu'étant destitué du secours efficace qui est nécessaire pour vouloir pleinement et pour faire ces commandemens, ils leur sont impossibles, selon cette possibilité prochaine et complète, dont la privation les mets en état de ne pouvoir effectivement accomplir ces commandemens. Et ils manquent de la grâce efficace, par laquelle il est besoin que ces commandemens leur deviennent prochainement et entièrement possibles : ou bien ils sont dépourvus de ce secours spécial, sans lequel l'homme justifié,

\* C'est-à-dire les Jansénistes.

comme dit le Concile de Trente, ne sauroit persévérer dans la justice qu'il a reçue ; c'est-à-dire, dans l'observation des commandemens de DIEU.

#### SECONDE.

On ne résiste jamais à la grâce de Jésus Christ, qui est précisément nécessaire pour chaque œuvre de piété. C'est-à-dire, elle n'est jamais frustrée de l'effet pour lequel DIEU la donne effectivement.

#### TROISIÈME.

Pour mériter et démériter dans l'état de la nature corrompue, il n'est point requis en l'homme une liberté qui l'exempte d'une infallibilité et d'une certitude nécessaire ; mais il suffit qu'il ait une liberté qui le delivre de la contrainte, et qui soit accompagnée du jugement et de l'exercice de la raison. Si l'on considère précisément l'essence de la liberté et du mérite, quoiqu'à raison de l'état où nous sommes en cette vie, notre âme se trouve toujours dans cette indifférence par laquelle la volonté, lorsqu'elle est conduite et gouvernée par la grace, prochainement nécessaire et efficace par elle-même, peut ne vouloir pas, cela est toutefois en telle sorte qu'il n'arrive jamais qu'elle ne veuille pas, lorsqu'elle est actuellement secourue de cette grâce.

## QUATRIÈME.

Les Demi-Pélagiens admettoient la nécessité de la grâce prévenante et intérieure pour commencer toute les actions, même pour le commencement de la foi ; et leurs sentimens étoient hérétiques en ce qu'ils vouloient que cette grâce fût telle que la volonté lui obeît ou la rejetât comme il lui plaisoit ; c'est-à-dire, que cette grace ne fût pas efficace.

## CINQUIÈME.

C'est parler en Demi Pélagien de dire que Jésus Christ est mort pour tous les hommes en particulier, sans en excepter un seul, en sorte que la grâce nécessaire au salut soit présentée à tous, sans exception de personne, par sa mort, et qu'il dépende du mouvement et de la puissance de la volonté d'acquérir ce salut par cette grâce générale, sans le secours d'une autre grâce efficace par elle-même. — *Besogne, tom. vi. pp. 281—290. Dom Clemencet, tom. iv. pp. 521—529.*

TOUR  
TO  
ALET AND LA GRANDE CHARTREUSE

BY  
DOM CLAUDE LANCELOT

IN WHICH ARE INSERTED SOME ACCOUNT OF THE MONASTERY, AND  
ABBOT REFORMER OF LA TRAPPE, AND OTHER ELUCIDATIONS  
TO THE ORIGINAL TEXT.





## PREFACE.

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DOM CLAUDE LANCELOT'S Tour to Alet, having given the title, and occupied the principal place in the first edition of this work, it appeared desirable not to cancel it, more especially as it is so immediately connected with Port Royal, the author being one of the most distinguished recluses of Les Granges, and the person to whom it was addressed, the Mère Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld d'Andilly, being perhaps the most distinguished of all the Abbesses of that celebrated house for high intellectual, united to spiritual endowments. It will, however, hold a very subordinate rank in this edition, both because it is not a necessary part of a memoir of Port Royal, and because being a sketch compiled for the author's own pleasure, without any view to publication, and whilst she was unacquainted with many of the most valuable Port Royal writers, it is rather to be considered as a compilation, to which Dom Lancelot's

Voyage to Alet, has furnished the substratum and connecting links, than as a translation or even paraphrase upon it.

It has retained the name of LANCELOT'S TOUR, simply to avoid the charge of plagiarism, because many of its materials were taken from Lancelot's Voyage to Alet.

This little tract has, however, no pretensions to be called a translation. It was at first a mere compilation of extracts and memoranda from Lancelot's work, which had been lent to me by Mrs. Hannah More. Finding it not to be easily procured, I noted down, at first solely for my own amusement, every fact which appeared curious, and every sentiment I esteemed more particularly valuable.

The selection was made with various degrees of precision. Where any passage appeared particularly striking or free from digression, it has been rendered with a degree of fidelity approaching to the accuracy of translation. In other instances, the fact or sentiment has alone been preserved, and an entire liberty used as to the expression.

A very considerable number of passages were wholly suppressed, as being destitute of every claim on the interest of a modern reader.

By this means the original work became curtailed nearly one half.

Whilst so much was on the one hand suppressed, nearly as much has, on the other, been added.

Lancelot often makes incidental allusions to persons and institutions familiarly known in France, but with which the English are comparatively but little conversant. These it became necessary to introduce to the protestant reader. Without some explanation, the original would have been unintelligible; for this purpose, recourse was had to a variety of other authors. The information they supplied was meant to be abridged, and added in the form of notes.

It was, however, suggested, that the necessity of constantly referring to the end of a book, occasions a most wearisome and unseasonable interruption. On second thoughts, it seemed preferable to interweave into the text all the information which appeared requisite to render it intelligible.

It seems almost superfluous to add, that this necessary liberty inevitably occasioned a still further departure from Dom Lancelot's original narrative; the added passages needed to be combined into one whole—to be so modelled, that the various *joinings on* (if the expression may be allowed) might not glaringly appear; whilst the information derived from a variety of other authors was accurate in point of fact, it was requisite that, with respect to

turn of thought and expression, it should coalesce with the work into which it was incorporated.

These licences having been assumed, the Tour to Alet, when finished, presented a *tout ensemble* very different from the original. It has certainly no pretensions to be offered as a translation of Dom Lancelot's work; and after having made this express declaration, the Author has not considered that criticism as fair or honourable, which proceeds on the false supposition of its having ever been offered as such to the public.

In reality, it is a sketch, combined of various miscellaneous information, in which both the facts and sentiments, and anecdotes are selected from different sources, and which have been erected upon the "*Voyage d'Alet*" as a foundation.

The author again repeats, that the title of Dom Lancelot's Letter to *La Mère Angélique*, is only retained, because it was, in fact, the substratum of this little tract, and furnishes the greater part of the materials. It is retained without scruple, because the degree in which it has pretensions to be considered as his has been fully ascertained. Yet, although widely differing from what Dom Lancelot's work is, this little narrative is offered with some degree of confidence as a faithful representation of what the writer believes Dom Lancelot's work would

have been, had it been addressed to an English instead of a French reader; and had it, instead of being a letter addressed to a contemporary and a private friend, been designed for that public, who would view the transactions of Port Royal from the distance of a hundred and fifty years.



## INTRODUCTION.

*Containing some necessary Preliminary Information  
respecting Dom Claude Lancelot.*

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DOM CLAUDE LANCELOT was born at Paris in the year 1616. He was early distinguished for piety and learning. At the age of two-and-twenty he became acquainted with Jean du Verger de Hauranne, the celebrated Abbé de St. Cyran, who was equally distinguished as the founder of the learned institution of Port Royal, and as the first and chief promulgator of what has been called Jansenism. Lancelot became devotedly attached to his master, and soon proved one of the most eminent disciples of the Port Royal School. Associated by his introduction to Port Royal, with Arnauld, Pascal, Nicole, and Saci, he was soon as much distinguished for philological, as these great men were for their moral and theological works. Equally esteemed for erudition, for piety, and for conciliating manners, he was selected, with Nicole, to superintend the Port Royal



School at Chênet. The celebrated Tillemont, Le Nain, Racine, and the Duke de Chevreuse, the beloved friend of Fénelon, were amongst his scholars. To him chiefly Europe is indebted for the Port Royal Latin, Greek, Spanish, and Italian grammars. He was also author of the collection of Greek primitives, and of two volumes, octavo, containing memoirs of his patron, the Abbé de St. Cyran, and other miscellaneous pieces. After the malice of the Jesuits had succeeded in abolishing the Port Royal schools, Dom Lancelot became tutor to the young princes of Conti. At the death of the princess, their mother, in 1672, he assumed the rule and habit of St. Bennet, in the abbey of St. Cyran. The persecution of the Port Royalists was still zealously pursued by the Jesuits. Their intrigues prevailed in gaining over the court party. Their united influence succeeded. Port Royal des Champs and the monastery of St. Cyran were both levelled to the ground, and their pious inhabitants exiled or imprisoned. Dom Claude Lancelot was banished to Quimperley in Lower Brittany. He lived to witness the final destruction of those places so endeared to him; and the banishment or death of all the pious friends of his youth, whom he most fondly loved. Yet GOD enabled him to rejoice amidst persecution, to bless his enemies and to endure unto the end. He died in the odour of sanctity, rich in faith

and good works. His life was stormy,—his latter end peaceful and glorious. He entered into his eternal reward, April 15th, 1712, at the advanced age of ninety-seven. The inhabitants of Quimperley still treasure up his habit, as a precious relic. Dom Lancelot composed several learned treatises on the rule of St. Bennet. They are highly esteemed, but are not interesting to general readers.



NARRATIVE OF A TOUR  
TO  
THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE  
&c.

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*To the Reverend Mère Angélique de St. Jean Arnauld,  
Abbess of Port Royal des Champs.*

PART I.

Alet, Christmas Eve, 1667.

MY REVEREND MOTHER,

I look upon it as a most peculiar blessing of GOD, that after calling me out of the world by His grace, His kind providence placed me in so close a connection with your honoured house. The Lord bestow upon me a grateful heart to appreciate such mercies! May He bestow that preparation by which it may not only receive the seed of the word, but, like good ground retain it! May it by the fulness of His grace, bring forth fruits an hundred-fold to His glory! And may He grant the understanding heart, that I may discern the mercies of His providence; as well as the awakened eye, to behold the wonders of His law.

It is the earnest wish of my heart, that every one of my dear friends at Port Royal, should become partakers of all the Lord's benefits to me. I can indeed teach nothing new, to my dear and honoured fathers and mothers in Christ. A relation of my little tour may perhaps, however, interest you, and beguile some tedious hours of your long and cruel captivity.

We left Paris on the sixth of August, 1667. We passed through Auxerre, Vezelay, and the celebrated Clugny. We also went to Lyons, where we visited the church of the great Irenæus.

We afterwards proceeded to Annecy, where we had the favour to see the mortal remains of the great St. Francis de Sales. They remain in their natural position, and are placed in a shrine by the grand altar; very near to the tomb of the celebrated Baroness de Chantal. Thus has GOD, in his providence, ordered that these two blessed saints, so united in spirit during life, should, like Saul and Jonathan, not be separated after death. Their bodies sleep in the same church, whilst their redeemed spirits rejoice together before the throne of the same Saviour.

I forgot to mention, that whilst at Lyons we went to see the monastery of Bellecourt, where St. Francis spent his last hours.

We visited the room where he died; and poured

out our souls in prayer close to the very bed, from which the soul of this eminent saint departed from earth, to behold the glory of his Lord. This place might indeed be termed a garret, rather than anything else. It is now a sort of lumber room, in the roof of the gardener's lodge, who still occupies the lower apartments, and who talked, with tears, of the blessed St. Francis, often repeating his last words, "O! my GOD, my desire is to Thee. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O GOD! Yes, mine eyes shall behold Thee, and not another; my heart and my flesh rejoice before the living GOD! I shall enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! I will sing the mercies of the Lord for ever and ever. O, when shall I appear before my GOD in Zion. He, Jesus, is a faithful GOD, and a Saviour. He is the Lamb slain for the sins of the whole world. He shall wash out my sins, and blot out all my transgressions!"

Whilst contemplating his earthly remains, a little incident concerning this truly venerable father in Israel occurred to my remembrance. Perhaps you may not have heard it, though it relates to your father, M. Arnauld d'Andilly. Whilst M. d'Andilly had an office at court, he was in the king's suite at Lyons. St. Francis had been sent to Paris on an embassy, by the Duke of Savoy; and it so happened

that just at this period, he passed through Lyons, on his way back. He celebrated mass before the king, and M. d'Andilly communicated at his hand, with the rest of the court. It is needless to remind *you* of the deep humility and devotion always expressed in your father's manner when partaking of this solemn ordinance. M. Robert Arnauld having been formerly acquainted with St. Francis, on his first visit to Paris, M. d'Andilly thought himself sufficiently authorised to call upon him. Accordingly he waited on the bishop after dinner.

As soon as M. d'Andilly entered the room, before he was announced, St. Francis rose to meet him, and addressed him in these remarkable words, "My son, for such I knew you to be in the breaking of bread." The venerable bishop then lifted up his hands to heaven, and gave him a most solemn and affecting blessing. St. Francis three days after entered into the joy of His Lord. So that your father was favoured with the dying benediction of this truly eminent and blessed saint.

This circumstance has often put me in mind of a favourite remark of M. de Balzac. He used to say, "That amidst the corruptions of a court, M. Arnauld d'Andilly was the only man who set an eminent example of all the moral virtues, without pride; and who dared to be conspicuous for all the Christian graces, without false shame."



From Annecy we proceeded to the Grande Chartreuse, near Grenoble.

All I had heard of this astonishing seclusion falls infinitely short of the reality. No adequate description can be given of the awful magnificence of this dreary solitude.

We travelled for some hours through a very thinly inhabited country. Here and there a few scattered huts are interspersed. At length even these were no longer to be seen. Nothing met the eye but barren wastes, or dark forests, which seemed of an almost interminable length, and which were nearly impervious to the light. We saw during the morning many herds of wild deer, and hares, in great numbers; and not unfrequently we were alarmed at the howling of wolves. Gradually the forest became hilly, then rocky. Our attention was taken up with the romantic beauty of the scenery, when the forest suddenly opened, and we saw before us, what is properly the entrance to the desert of the Grande Chartreuse.

Imagine a gloomy forest abruptly terminated by immense mountains. The tops covered with snow, and the sides presenting a bare front of naked rock, and beetling brows, undiversified by the least symptom of vegetation.

The desert of the Chartreuse is wholly inaccessible but by one exceedingly narrow defile. This

pass, which is only a few feet wide, is indeed truly fearful. It winds between tremendous granite rocks, which overhang above; and appear ready every moment to overwhelm the awe-struck traveller. Indeed the crags above project so far beyond the perpendicular, that they appear literally suspended without support.

They cast such an awful gloom on the path, that our horses as well as ourselves, seemed impressed with fear, and ready to start back at the strangeness of the scene, and the sullen hollow echo of every footfall.

At the farther end of the defile is a most romantic mountain torrent. We crossed it on a rude stone bridge; and by a sudden wind in the road, immediately saw before us the tremendous Alp, on which the monastery is placed. In order to give you any idea of its position, I should observe, that the mountain on which it is situated, though apparently of an inaccessible height, is yet surrounded on every side by rocks still more elevated, whose summits are covered with perpetual snows.

No sooner is the defile passed, than nothing which possesses either animal or vegetable life is seen.

No huntsman winds his horn in these dreary solitudes; no shepherd's pipe is allowed to disturb the deep repose. It is not permitted the mountaineers ever to lead their flocks beyond the entrance; and

even beasts of prey seem to shrink back from the dreaded pass, and instinctively to keep away from a desert, which neither furnishes subsistence nor covert.

Nothing meets the eye but tremendous precipices and rude fragments of rock, diversified with glaciers in every possible fantastic form.

Our mules began slowly to ascend. The path is rocky, and winds round the mountain. How to describe the terrors of the ascent I know not.

Sometimes it was only a narrow ledge, scarcely affording footing for our mules, and overhanging dizzy precipices below. At others, the rocks, jutting out above, overhung till they formed a complete arch over their heads, and rendered the path so dark, that we could scarcely see to pick our way. Frequently huge fragments of rock fell with a tremendous crash from above, always threatening instant destruction, and occasionally wholly blocking up the road. We were then obliged to use tools which we brought on purpose, to make fresh stepping places. Once we had to pass over a narrow pine-plank, which shook at every step; this was placed by way of bridge over a yawning chasm, which every moment threatened to ingulph the traveller in its marble jaws. We often passed close by the side of abysses so profound as to be totally lost in darkness; whilst the awful roaring of the waters,

struggling in their cavities, shook the very rocks on which we trod.

We laid the bridle on our mules' necks in silence ; lifting up our hearts to that great and inscrutable Being, who has created so many wonders, and whose eternal Godhead and almighty power are thus awfully and clearly written, even from the creation of the world, in the things which He has made.

As we ascended still higher, we were every now and then disturbed by the hoarse screams of the eagles (the only tenants of these deserts) who started from their eyries at the sudden disruption of the masses of rock above, and wheeled in long circles round the mountain.

After some hours' toiling in this manner, and at the height of about half a league, we reached the precincts, or rather outward court of the monastery itself. This building is not a part of the convent, but is a distinct establishment, composed of lay-brothers, or other persons, who wish to be under the direction of the Chartreux, without wholly conforming to the severity of their rule. These persons chiefly manage the temporal concerns of the community ; and by their industry their few wants are easily supplied. All round the court are cells, for the residence of those amongst them who occupy their working hours in the various handicraft labours which are necessary to the community.

Here we gladly partook of some refreshment. Our journey, however, was not so soon terminated. We ascended a quarter of a league farther before we came to the monastery itself.

The difficulties in the first part of our ascent, appeared mere trifles to those we had to encounter in the latter. The snow rendered the path so dubious, and the ice made it so slippery, that we scarcely took a step but at the imminent hazard of our lives. The constant sliding of loose stones under the snow added to the risk. Our gracious Lord, however, preserved us from painful fear; how often have we experienced His kind protection and mercies, even before we knew Him, and before we had devoted our hearts to Him. In your long captivity He still spreads beneath you His everlasting arms! and in our journeyings for His sake, He who keeps Israel without slumbering or sleeping, blessed our coming in, as He had our going out. He mercifully preserved us from all evil; and above all, He kept our souls stayed upon Him. Before sunset we reached the convent gate.

The monastery itself is as striking as the approach; its prodigious strength and high antiquity give it a singularly venerable appearance. The circumstances of its position increase the sensation of awe.

The Chartreuse, though situated a whole league

above the base of the mountain, is yet placed in a bottom, as it respects the summit. Nay, so far are the rocks elevated above its highest turrets, that it takes two hours more good travelling to attain the highest practicable point. In fact, the stupendous rocks, which inclose it on every side, reach far above the clouds, which mostly, indeed, rest upon their summits; here they form a dense shade, which like a dark awning, completely conceals the sun from the view.

Were this not the case, the fierce reflection of its beams would be almost insupportable. Even on the brightest day, the sun is only visible (owing to the proximity of the rocks), as from the bottom of a deep well. On the west, indeed, there is a little space, which being thus sheltered, is occupied by a dark grove of pine trees; on every other side the rocks, which are as steep as so many walls, are not more than ten yards from the convent. By this means a dim and gloomy twilight perpetually reigns within; and it is difficult to read small print but by lamplight, even in the noon of the brightest summer's day.

The church belonging to the monastery is exceedingly neat; it is kept in beautiful order, and is wainscotted throughout. The stone floor is entirely covered by another, formed of woods of different colours, and arranged in compartments. This



precaution is absolutely necessary, as a preservative against the damp; it likewise tends to mitigate the cold, which is intense. I think the inside of their chapel appears about the size of that at Port Royal. The inside of their choir too very nearly corresponds with yours. Their cloister is much longer than that at Port Royal; it is, however, exceedingly narrow, not more than two cells in width. The cloisters have the appearance of two very long streets; they are neither parallel, nor on one uniform level; it was a matter of necessity to accommodate the building to the inequalities of the rocks. It has, therefore, been impracticable to form the passages in right lines, or upon a plain level; owing to this, a person at one end of the cloister cannot discern any one who may be standing at the other.

Their cells are peculiarly small and poor; the chimneys are placed in the angle formed by the corner of the room. By this method a large portion of heat is reflected, and equally diffused throughout the room at a very small expense of firing. This contrivance appears absolutely indispensable in a situation where fire-wood is so remote and the cold so extreme. The snow is generally, during six months of the year, higher than the tops of their garden-walls. The season is considered peculiarly favourable whenever the depth of the snow does not



make it unsafe to venture out during eight months in the year.

In the midst of summer they are exposed to precisely the opposite inconvenience ; for about a month the heat is intense. The sun's rays are reflected on every side from bare limestone and granite rocks ; and, as no shade intervenes to screen them, they are concentrated in the hollow in which the monastery stands, as in a focus. At these seasons the heat may literally be compared to that of an oven ; the snow and ice meanwhile melt from the heights above, and frequently fill all the lower part of the building with water. Occasionally, the inundation is so rapid as to carry with it all the soil which, at immense labour, they have brought from below, to form little gardens on the bare rock.

We were much pleased with our visit, and edified by the learned and pious discourse of these excellent men. We prolonged our stay above a week. Their General, or, to speak more correctly, their Prior, entertained us with the greatest cordiality. The repasts of the Carthusians are exceedingly slender ; everything is served up in wooden bowls, consequently all they eat is either lukewarm or completely cold. The monks take it in turn to read during every meal ; the passages are selected by the Prior, and are always either from Scripture or the lives of the Fathers. At table every motion is

regulated by signal; the community sit in perfect silence, with their eyes cast down the whole time. A brother takes it in turn to stand at the head of the table with a slight wand in his hand; to its stroke, though almost imperceptible, the servitors and guests are equally attentive. At one instant every bowl is lifted up; at once they are all set down. The table is served and diserved in the same manner. The repasts of the whole community are conducted with the precision of a regiment going through its military evolutions. By this means very little noise is occasioned; and, as each person performs his part as softly as possible, not one syllable of the whole lecture is lost.

The Carthusians have a very extensive library; it is, indeed, equally valuable and magnificent. Many of the members of the community are men of deep learning and extensive information. Much of their time is occupied both in composing and in transcribing books; and the world is indebted for many valuable works to the pious labours of these recluses.

I was much struck with the expression of settled peace and deep devotion visible in their countenances; this indeed is by no means exclusively peculiar to the monks belonging to this individual monastery. It is said to be generally characteristic of the order. I remember the blessed St. Francis

de Sales frequently mentioned with pleasure a little anecdote on this subject; and I rather think the hero was one of his early acquaintance. He was however a young man of large expectations, but unfortunately distinguished not only for gaiety but for profligacy. After spending the evening in gaming with several young persons as wild as himself, he became completely intoxicated; the party broke up at a very late hour in the night, or rather at a very early one in the morning. The youth returned home, groping his way through dark and empty streets, when the deep tolling of a bell caught his ear; the sound apparently proceeded from a building at no great distance. From a desire of frolic he entered, wondering what persons could be watching at such an hour. What was his surprise at finding himself in the choir of a Carthusian monastery; the whole community were assembled at matins. Each one sat in his respective place in silence, his eyes cast down to the ground in the deepest recollection and humiliation; not an eye was lifted up to observe who had entered. One solitary lamp cast a dim light over their figures. He attempted to smile, but the peace and deep devotion written on their countenances, struck his heart with an unknown awe, as though GOD were of a truth present with them; he stood riveted to the spot, whilst the solemnity of the place, and the deep silence which reigned

around, increased his sensations. He was motionless, not only with surprise but with reverence; after some minutes the organ struck up, and every one arising joined in an anthem of praise. His tears began to flow. "Alas!" thought he, "how very different the purpose for which I watched to that of these saints; I watched not to give praises, but to blaspheme His holy name. GOD be merciful to me a sinner! Yes, whilst I was even engaged in wilful deliberate sin, that merciful and holy GOD was watching over me in pity, to bring me to this place, to give me one more chance of saving my wretched soul. Surely it was in mercy He brought me here! and on that mercy, though my sins are grievous, I will yet cast myself." The anthem being ended, prayers began. By an irresistible impulse the youth prostrated himself with them, and no doubt but his prayers, with theirs, were accepted at the throne of grace. From that hour he became a different man. He lived an happy and valuable member of the church of Christ; and died, in full assurance of faith, in that very convent which had witnessed his conversion. Thus he who came to scoff, might be eminently said, to remain to pray. I cannot relate the above anecdote with the energy of St. Francis; but I will add a concluding observation. "This circumstance plainly shows, of how much importance it is, not only to retain christian

principle in its integrity ; but also to let it appear externally ; and to allow it to model every, the least circumstance of countenance, manner, dress, in short the whole demeanour. A christian appearance speaks irresistibly, though silently, to those who would not listen to christian conversation. It requires an exercised christian eye to discern grace in another, where no external livery (if I may so say) indicates what master we serve ; and to whose power alone our help is to be attributed. The world is ever ready to attribute to nature, the fruits of grace. Without an external sign, it can scarcely discern the internal spiritual grace.”

The world is ever ready to apply to religion, a maxim of law ; “*De non apparentibus, et de non existentibus, eadem ratio est.*”

The order of Carthusians was originally founded by St. Bruno, a native of Cologne. He was descended from noble, and religious parents, and completed his academical course with brilliant success. After having held the highest offices in the church, both at Cologne and Rheims, he suddenly resolved to quit the world, and to spend the remainder of his days in monastic seclusion. He imparted his resolution to six young men, who determined to be the companions of his retirement. They withdrew to a seclusion, named Saisse Fontaine, in the diocese of Langres. Afterwards Bruno went to Grenoble,

in order to look out for a still more sequestered and inaccessible situation. Hugh, bishop of that city, strongly recommended the desert of the Chartreuse. It was, he said, effectually precluded from intrusion; by the frightful precipices, and almost inaccessible rocks by which it was surrounded. He added, as a still more forcible inducement, that for some time before Bruno's request was made known to him, he had continually seen seven brilliant and supernatural stars, hovering over the mountains, and pointing them out, as he believed by a divine indication. Accordingly, in the year 1084, Bruno, with his companions, retired to the Chartreuse. He was then three and twenty. He did not institute any new rule; but revived the disused rule of St. Bennet, in all its primitive austerity. The bishop had scarcely allowed his friend time to establish himself in this desert, when he passed a law, that no huntsman, no shepherd nor any woman, should ever pass its confines. The situation of La Chartreuse seems to render the latter precaution perfectly superfluous. Bruno lived six years in this spot. He was afterwards sent for to Rome, by Urban the Second, who had formerly been a disciple of Bruno, and who had the highest opinion of his judgment. After arranging all the affairs of his monastery, Bruno obeyed. Disgusted by the vice and intrigues of a court, he soon quitted Rome. He retired into the desert of Squillace, in



Calabria. There he founded another monastery, at which he expired on the 6th of October, 1101, aged 40 years.

The original Chartreux far exceeded the present, in the austerity of their discipline. Peter the venerable, was Abbot of Clugny, at the very period in which St. Bruno established his order. Both he, and Guiges the first prior, have left an ample account of them. Each member of the community had a cell, with a little garden adjoining. In this cell he ate, slept, and worked; excepting during the hours of out-door exercise, which each passed in cultivating his own little garden. By this means the recluses, however numerous, had no communication with each other. They never saw each other, but in the hour of public service; excepting on a Sunday, when they were allowed to go to the proper officer, who gave them their portions of food for the week. Every one cooked his provision in his own cell.

Their only sustenance is coarse brown bread, and vegetables. They are likewise allowed to receive fish, whenever it is given them. In case of illness, they are allowed two spoonfuls of wine to a pint of water. On high festivals they are allowed cheese. The cells are provided with water by a brook which runs close by, and which enters the cells through holes left in the wall for that purpose. They always wear hair cloth next the skin. Whenever it is neces-



sary to make any communication to their brethren, they do it by signs if possible. Every cell is furnished with skins of parchment, pens, ink, and colours; and each one employs himself, for a certain time, every day, in writing or transcribing. No one is admitted to take the vows, till the age of twenty. Such were the original customs of the Carthusians.

We did not ascend the utmost practicable height of the mountain. We went, however, half a league at least, beyond the monastery. Here we saw two beautiful chapels. The first is dedicated to the Holy Virgin, and the latter to St. Bruno. This is said to be the original spot which was selected by him when he first made his retreat in this desert. It is almost uninhabitable, from the intense cold, and the great depth of the snow. When St. Bruno went into Italy, his six companions were buried in one single night, by a heavy fall of snow. Only three of their bodies were ever discovered.

The cause to which tradition ascribes St. Bruno's conversion is singular. Some, however, are inclined to deem it fabulous. Whilst a Canon at Paris, Bruno formed a peculiar intimacy with another Canon, of the name of Raymond Diocres. The latter is said to have been exceedingly social and agreeable, but very far from being a religious character. One day they both dined together at a large party; after a convivial meeting, Raymond was suddenly seized with an

apoplectic fit, and fell on the floor, without any signs of life. Bruno was deeply distressed. Preparations were made for the funeral; and, as a particular friend of the deceased, he was of course invited. The body was brought on a bier, in an open coffin, covered with a pall, by torch light. It was placed in the chapel, which was hung with black, and illuminated with a profusion of tapers. A solemn anthem was sung, and the priest began the service. After a little while, the pall which covered the body appeared to heave, and the supposed corpse slowly raised itself out of the coffin. Its eyes were glazed and fixed, and the paleness of death overspread its stiff and sharpened features, whilst, with a look of deep anguish and horror, it uttered in a slow and hollow voice, the following words: — “Justo judicio Dei appellatus sum! Justo judicio Dei judicatus sum! Justo judicio Dei condemnatus sum!” (By the just judgment of GOD I am cited! By the just judgment of GOD I am judged! By the just judgment of GOD I am condemned!) With the last words he sent forth a groan of unutterable anguish and despair, and fell down dead!

The assembly were petrified with horror; the book fell from the priest's hands; each one stood motionless. In the midst of this awful silence, Bruno, then a youth, stepped forward, and prostrating himself on the ground, cried aloud for mercy, and pronounced

a solemn vow, dedicating himself henceforth entirely to the service of GOD, who had given him to witness so unspeakably awful a judgment.

There are now above forty religious in the monastery of the Grande Chartreuse. Fourteen mules are continually employed in bringing provisions, firing, and other necessaries. These sure-footed creatures are so well trained, that they are never known to make a slip, or lose their way, though unaccompanied by any guide. During the winter, indeed, the road is absolutely impracticable, otherwise they regularly go down the mountain, and stop of their own accord at the porter's cell, in the forest. It is this man's sole business to provide for the convent, and to accommodate those who visit the monastery. At this well-known door the mules stand till their panniers are re-loaded, and at the signal of a whistle, they spontaneously set out on their return. It was on some of these very mules on which we ascended. It is really curious to observe these creatures in bad weather. Their sagacity is truly wonderful. They scrape the snow first with their hoofs as they go along, that they may every time ensure safe footing. I am told that in some places, where the road is so exceedingly slippery that it is impossible to stand, they will even squat down on their hind legs, and slide down the mountain, balancing themselves by leaning either way, with the nicest precision. They practise

the same, I am informed, in the descent of the Andes. I have heard they there slide with incredible rapidity, down precipices almost as steep as the ridge of a house; and that where the path is so narrow, and turns so suddenly, that it seems impossible but they must instantly be dashed over the precipice before them. It is even said, by persons of unquestioned veracity, that the path is sometimes scarcely so wide as their bodies. At such times it is only by leaning, to preserve the equilibrium, and by the velocity with which they move, that they avoid instant destruction.

In these courses, they stop themselves by striking one of their fore feet into the snow. Even in this respect, these sagacious animals exert their usual ingenuity. They put the hoof several times on the surface of the snow, to slacken their course, before they finally strike, lest they should break their leg by the concussion which on a sudden stop at the brink of a precipice sometimes happens.

After leaving the Grande Chartreuse, we passed through Grenoble, and Avignon. From thence we went to Limoux, which is only about one and twenty miles from Alet, the place of our destination.

The ride from Limoux to Alet lies through one of the most beautiful and picturesque countries I ever beheld. The ground is beautifully diversified with green hills and fertile dales, with corn fields and

cottages. We rode many miles through vineyards and groves of pomegranate, olive, and odoriferous orange-trees. The air was in many places quite perfumed with their fragrance. The peasants' cottages too are remarkably pretty. They are generally white, and were either covered with roses and woodbine, or with jessamine and myrtle in full blossom.

On approaching Alet, the scene became still more romantic and diversified. Alet is situated at the foot of the Pyrenees. The diocese, which was formerly an abbacy belonging to the order of St. Bennet, extends itself as far as Spain. The revenues were so vast, that Pope John XXII. was induced to divide it into three distinct bishoprics, viz. those of Alet, Mirepoix, and St. Papulphus. Even after this division, a considerable portion yet remained, which was given to the chapter of Narbonne.

On drawing near to Alet, we were much struck with the variety of the prospects. The beauty and richness of the scenery bordering on the Pyrenees, together with the endless change of landscape, is beyond description. Sometimes the mountains rise in gentle slopes, covered with green herbage, and innumerable herds and flocks feed on their sides. In other places the mountains were wild and rocky, but covered with orange-trees in full blossom, together with olive, citron, myrtle, arbutus, and innumerable other trees, exhibiting the richest variety of flower,

odour, and foliage. Frequently the steep precipices were clothed with thick wood, down to the very foot of the mountains; at others, a bold front of rock would appear, enriched with lichens of every different tint, and ornamented with elegant festoons of creeping shrubs, or with the wild flowers of the soil, which are very luxuriant and beautiful. We often saw wild goats browsing in the most inaccessible places, and amused ourselves in watching them skip from rock to rock.

Now and then we were surprised by openings in the trees, unexpectedly discovering the most picturesque waterfalls that can be imagined. They fall from the summits of the mountains, sometimes in one continued sheet, and sometimes broken by the projecting rocks into a number of distinct falls, till reaching the foot, they give rise to limpid streams, which wind amongst the valleys, and at which the cattle quenched their thirst.

The entrance to Alet is through a defile of rocks. Though not very narrow, it is yet difficult to pass, because the whole width is occupied by a rapid river. To remedy this inconvenience, a road sufficiently wide for a small two-wheeled cart is hollowed out of the side of one of the rocks above the level of the water. A similar mode was adopted to make a foot or horse path on the opposite side. Neither of the roads are very safe, but the latter is far the most



dangerous, both on account of its narrowness, and of its greater elevation above the stream. On this road the truly venerable Bishop of Alet very nearly lost his life, some years ago, as he was passing it on his litter, in one of his visits round his diocese. The circumstance occurred as follows.

A horse which was following his litter, by some accident struck against the hindermost mule. The animal lost its balance, and slipped over the edge of the precipice. By a providence almost miraculous, the fore-mule singly sustained for a considerable time the weight of his fallen companion, together with the whole burden of the litter, in which were two persons, M. d'Alet, and his attendant ecclesiastic. M. d'Alet was praying, and did not therefore immediately see the full extent of the danger. His companion, however, instantly perceiving it, exclaimed, "My Lord, there is nothing left but instantly to commend our souls to GOD." The prelate, to whom death had long lost its sting, replied with his wonted calmness, "Let us do so then." At that moment the mule, by some means or other, contrived to find footing on some projecting point of rock, and raising up the litter, gave both the gentlemen an opportunity to get out in safety. M. d'Alet no sooner saw the danger to which they had been exposed, than he immediately knelt down to give thanks to GOD.



He has since erected a cross on the spot. At the foot he has inscribed the following words, from the 118th psalm, "I have been thrust at sore that I might fall, but the Lord helped me." Thus we see that the Lord still gives His angels charge over His servants, to keep them in all His ways; at His command, they still bear them up in their hands, lest they should dash their feet against a stone.

The defile winds between the rocks for the full space of half a league. The pass is fearful. Though not so magnificent, it is far more dangerous than that of La Chartreuse. At the termination of the passage, the rocks suddenly expand, forming a grand and vast amphitheatre, covered with forests. In the bottom is an extensive and fertile plain, watered by the river Aude, and full of herds and flocks. Immediately in front, about the centre of the valley, appears the noble archiepiscopal palace of Alet. The town itself is inconsiderable; it might with more propriety be termed a neat village. The appearance, however, of the palace is truly magnificent, both in point of size and antiquity; it was built by the ancient abbots, and is surrounded by very extensive, but old-fashioned gardens. In one of them is a noble raised terrace, which commands the whole course of the Aude through the town. The whole appearance of the palace, rising

in the midst of its double terraces and gardens, with the magnificent double avenues to every entrance, and a noble stone bridge, thrown over the Aude, render the approach to Alet very striking; the first view, however, comprises the whole of the objects which are worth seeing.

On our arrival, we were surprised to find the gates of the town shut, like the doors of a private house. We have since understood that they have orders to keep them closed on Sundays, in order to prevent carriages from unnecessarily passing. The modest sober appearance of the persons we saw in the streets was really striking. By that only we should have known ourselves to be in the neighbourhood of the good bishop of Alet. The streets are wonderfully neat and clean. We could see into the houses as our carriage passed along. I think there was scarcely a family who were not either collected reading the Scriptures or in prayer.

On reaching the palace, I was much struck with the primitive Christian simplicity which distinguished the interior. Although the episcopal residence is so magnificent a building, yet nothing is to be seen within but what corresponds with the strictest humility and self-denial. I could have fancied myself at the house of that first of Christian bishops, who needed the authority of an apostle to

persuade him, for his health's sake, to add a little wine to his usual beverage.

The entrance-hall and ante-chamber are both noble apartments. They have been much admired on account of their size, and the accuracy of their proportions. Neither of them are furnished or decorated with hangings: a large Scripture piece in each, by one of the best masters, is the only ornament. Long wooden benches are placed down the sides, close to the wall, for the convenience of those who call. At one end is a spacious fireplace, with seats for the old and infirm. An immense blazing wood-fire on the hearth effectually diffuses warmth over the whole apartment.

The bishop's study is actually not larger than one of the cells in your monastery at Port Royal. It is only furnished with a table, a reading-desk, book-shelves, and a few joint-stools.

The venerable prelate received us with the most affectionate and truly paternal kindness. His great age, and the very severe illness, from which he is just recovered, prevented him from speaking much. His countenance and manner, however, were full of holiness and love, mingled with apostolic gravity and sincerity.

I never saw a person whose appearance more strongly expressed his true character. His first aspect shows the apostolic pastor of a Christian

church, the venerable dignitary of a potent realm, and the humble saint rejoicing in persecution for Christ's sake.

But I forget that I have not yet introduced this truly admirable man to your acquaintance.

Nicholas Pavillon, bishop of Alet, is son to Stephen Pavillon, who held a civil office under government, and grandson to Nicholas Pavillon, a celebrated advocate of the parliament of Paris. Both his father and mother were persons of superior piety. Distinguished for affluence, they were yet more so for Christian simplicity, self-denial, and humility; a simplicity which they were not only careful to maintain throughout their whole household economy, but with a love for which they were peculiarly anxious to inspire their children, which is often too much neglected amongst religious parents.

Their house exhibited the Christian abstemiousness, regularity, moderation, religious practices, and diffusive charity of a well-regulated monastery.

No servant was received into the house who was not piously disposed. Every member of the family regularly assisted at morning and evening worship. To ardent devotion, this excellent household united the most extensive charity; all that their riches furnished beyond the most moderate comforts, was poured, with exuberant abundance, into the bosoms of their indigent brethren. His mother was espe-

cially remarkable for the tenderness of her compassion; she and Madame de Fouquet, in order more effectually to relieve the distressed, formed an association for the purpose of dispensing medicines; and in this kind office they not only employed their servants, but continually dressed the most loathsome wounds of the poor with their own hands.

He was born in 1597; sprung from the bosom of so pious a family, he could scarcely fail to receive those early instructions on which the divine word encourages us to look for an abundant blessing.

His tender years manifested a particular openness to religious impressions; he not only delighted to assist at public instructions, but, on his return, loved to repeat all he had heard to his family. His love of prayer, when a child, was remarkable. When quite a boy, he often lingered in the church after the congregation had departed, and spent a considerable time in prayer and solitary meditation; indeed devotion was habitually visible in his countenance, so that when M. d'Alet was placed at school, in the college of Navarre, his companions often declared, that he not only won their friendship by his cheerful kindness, but that his whole demeanour, and the very expression of his countenance, silently obtained an influence over their consciences, and assisted in retaining them in their duty. His assiduity at his studies was soon remarked, though

not that genius which since, independently of his piety, would have distinguished him for eloquence in the pulpit. It is a remarkable fact, that several orators, who were afterwards considered most noted for brilliant eloquence, were in early youth considered as men of slow parts. The celebrated Bossuet was more distinguished at school for perseverance than for talent. Though he seldom joined in the amusements of his comrades, he also seldom obtained the regard of his teachers; nay, he was so noted amongst them for a mere plodder, that his school-fellows, in derision, were wont, by a wretched pun, or quibble upon his name, to call him, "*Bos suetus aratro.*"

But the principal and favourite study of M. Pavillon was that of the Holy Scriptures; he entered upon it at a very early age, and continued it all his life so assiduously that it became perfectly familiar to him.

As M. Pavillon grew up, his talents unfolded. Placed under the direction of Vincent de Paul, institutor of the missions, his zeal, his piety, his erudition, and his eloquence, soon became conspicuous. At first, indeed, he fell into an error common to young and zealous missionaries, but which not unfrequently impedes their usefulness. His sermons were too long; he corrected this fault in consequence of an anecdote related to him by M. Vincent. —



“After having spent much strength and labour to little purpose,” said this zealous evangelist, “I was one day lamenting before GOD, as I walked to church, the little fruits of my exertions. As I went along I was overtaken by a vine-dresser, who was also going the same way; I took an opportunity of asking him how the missions were liked: ‘Sir,’ replied the peasant, ‘we all feel obliged to you for your kind intentions; we are all likewise sensible that everything you tell us is good, but you preach too long; we ignorant boors are just like our own wine-vats—the juice must have plenty of room left to work; and, once filled to the brim, if you attempt to pour in more, even if it were the very best juice in the world, it will only be spilt on the ground and lost.’”

M. d’Alet always considered this little incident as an important and providential lesson; and one to which he afterwards was much indebted for the great success of his missions.

Satisfied with being made useful, he always shunned preferment. About this period he became acquainted with your excellent uncle, M. Arnauld d’Andilly; he, without consulting M. Pavillon, recommended him in a particular manner to the Cardinal de Richelieu. The minister well knew M. d’Andilly’s piety, and the value of his recommendation: he soon after invested M. Pavillon with the



Bishopric of Alet. This diocese was in a peculiarly deplorable state. Ravaged by the bloody civil wars, which had so long desolated France: cruelty, selfishness, and ignorance overspread the whole face of the country, and seemed indigenious to the soil. Whilst the rest of France recovered from her wounds, and tasted the blessings of peace and civilisation, Alet was still left in its wretched state. Too remote from the capital for the great; too barbarous and too ignorant for the man of letters; none but a devoted Christian would have undertaken the charge of reforming it: and as none unconstrained by the love of Christ would have undertaken it, so none unassisted by His almighty power and Spirit, could have effected it. At this juncture, GOD, in mercy to Alet, raised up M. Pavillon, and established him in the episcopal see.

The new bishop immediately began a reform, which he has carried on ever since, with indefatigable zeal. The instruction both of clergy and laity, equally occupy his attention. Not content with establishing colleges for the one, and schools for the other, in every part of the diocese, he has, at a great expense, instituted an establishment for the purpose of educating masters and mistresses.

The basis of this reformation was the inculcation throughout the whole diocese of the duty of habitual prayer, the diligent study of the Holy Scriptures,

and the assiduous education of all the youth. He carried his pastoral care so far, as to make inquiry of every individual family, whether they were in the practice of daily prayer both mornings and evenings.

M. d'Alet employed several months every year in making visitations in the different parishes of his diocese. In each he always made a point of explaining the gospel of the day. He also wrote in the most pressing manner to M. de Saci, the director of Port Royal, and to many pious bishops and ecclesiastics, in order to urge them to make a new translation of the Bible for general distribution. Such a blessing attended the labours of M. d'Alet, and his excellent coadjutors at Port Royal, that incalculable numbers of Bibles were both purchased, and distributed gratis, by the private Bible societies, which were established (not only amongst the affluent, but down to the very lowest servants at Port Royal), and Louis XIV. at his own private expense alone, distributed twenty-six thousand French Testaments, and as many Psalters, amongst the poor. Besides which, government, under his direction, gave fifty thousand Testaments, two hundred thousand Psalters, in French, out of the public fund. And, so zealous was the Church in this good work, that three or four years after the death of Louis, a mandate was published, signed by a hundred bishops of France, referring the people to the exhortations of the

Church, on studying the Scriptures; pointing out to them the numerous French translations which had been promulgated in that reign only, and finally concluding in these words; "The voice of the Church speaks continually, not only by her decisions and exhortations on this subject; but by the multitude of French translations of the Holy Scriptures, lately made; by the zeal of her bishops in diffusing them, and by the liberality and piety of the late king, who placed such numbers of copies in their hands for gratuitous distribution. Surely the Church will never yield to the communities of Separatists, the advantage of zeal and ardour in reading the sacred Scriptures."

Amongst the most zealous of the French clergy, in promoting Scriptural knowledge, was M. d'Alet. "A bishop," said he, "is the sun of his diocese; he should labour to impart to it the spiritual light of divine truth, as well as the spiritual heat of divine fervour."

In the seminaries which M. d'Alet established for the education of the clergy, he made a still greater point of diligently inculcating the most assiduous study of the word of GOD. Penetrated with an exalted idea of the dignity of those who are the ambassadors of Christ, he endeavoured to inculcate upon their minds everything which might assist their spiritual growth. But he also strove with equal

care to separate them from all those merely curious studies which tend to inflame pride, whilst they leave the heart barren. "A priest," said he, "should be solidly instructed; because Jesus Christ has established him as one of the lights of the world; but then his learning should be confined to the law of GOD; because it is his duty to make His sacred word the sole subject of his instructions to the people." On this principle M. d'Alet required, that his ecclesiastics should seek, by a continual perusal of Scripture, and a constant meditation on its contents, every instruction and exhortation they gave to others. And he continually repeated to them, that, in order to render these divine truths efficacious from their lips, they must first be adopted by themselves, so as to be engraven on their hearts, and manifested in their lives. "The law of GOD," said he, "must be your guide and your light. It is the word of GOD which will be your guide. Study it then in the Holy Scriptures, which have been given us for our instruction; and *beware of those modern glosses, whose whole aim has been to abate the sanctity of this standard, and to flatter, instead of controlling, the passions of men.*"

The good effects of M. d'Alet's plans were soon conspicuous. His diocese seemed completely transformed. Alet became distinguished for piety, sobriety, industry, and regularity. M. de Richelieu

was complimented on every hand for his wise choice, and France bestowed on M. d'Alet the honourable titles of Father of the Poor, Counsellor of the Good, Light and support of the Clergy, Defender of Truth and of Christian discipline. Lastly, he was esteemed the most humble, although the most highly valued character in the kingdom.

Such was *then* the opinion of France. Well might we have inferred, that after a long night of Cimmerian darkness, the kingdoms of this world were at length becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. It was however soon evident, that now, as in the apostles' days, the carnal mind is still enmity against GOD, and that he who will be a servant of Christ cannot long please men. The powerful, whose vices he attacked, raised a cabal, and preferred very serious charges against him at court. On examination, his innocence was fully proved. Soon after the persecutions of the Port Royalists took place, M. d'Alet was invited to countenance them by his signature. This he steadily refused to do. In consequence of his integrity, he was himself become obnoxious to the persecutors. Wearied out by the cabal and intrigue of the Jesuits, the court has publicly disgraced the holiest prelate in the realm, and the first reformer now living. Instigated by ambition, Cardinal Richelieu deliberately undertook the unrelenting persecution of a man, of whom he

has himself repeatedly declared, that in the pulpit, he exhibited the zeal of St. Paul; at the altar, the devotion of St. Basil; that with princes, he had the wisdom of St. Ambrose; with the poor the charity of St. Nicholas. That in the midst of the world, he had always the guilelessness of Nathaniel; and that the recesses of his heart, at all times burnt with the love of St. John.

The bishop of Alet's house exhibits a model of true Christian hospitality, as well as of primitive simplicity. Each guest is left at liberty, without being ever neglected. Matters are so arranged, that every one has some hours in retirement, and that for the occupation of others, objects of useful employment spontaneously present themselves. Some considerable portion of every day is devoted to cheerful, yet pious and instructive conversation, and to social, yet beneficial occupations.

The bishop possesses the art of directing discourse usefully without constraint. He never forces the subject, but always gives, even to the most remote, a tincture of his own piety. His conversation appears to me a true model of social intercourse, directed by Christian piety and spiritual wisdom.

He equally avoids the error of those worldling who always shun religion, and of those unwise religionists, who by making it the sole subject of discourse, are often led into formality and hypocrisy.



Here is no religious chit-chat. He never utters a sacred truth without appearing deeply penetrated by the awful reality.

The topics of discourse at Alet have always truth of some description for their object. Philosophy, natural and experimental; history; mathematics in all its branches; and mechanics, afford frequent recreations at the episcopal palace. Nor are the languages, or sacred music neglected. The bishop generally avoids introducing poetry, or works of imagination: I believe he thinks they are useless, as not having truth for their object; and deleterious, by tending to inflame the passions. With this exception, he is remarkable for the happy mode in which he takes a part in any subject which may be started. Only, he conscientiously directs it to useful ends; managing to converse on all subjects, without trifling on any.

When the bishop himself leads the conversation, it is mostly of a religious nature; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

When with those whose religious sentiments permit him freely to unfold himself, then indeed his lips seem touched with a living coal from the altar.

I have often seen his hearers wrapped in astonishment and awe at the apostolic zeal and sanctity with which he declared divine truths, in the name of Him who sent him.



His wisdom, information, and good sense, render his conversation instructive on all subjects. Yet it is evident this is the one on which his heart dilates, and that this is the point in which all his other studies centre. Though not always conversing on religion, it is at all times apparent, that it is the medium through which he views every other thing; and I think his deep piety is almost as perceptible in the spirituality with which he speaks of temporal things, as in the wisdom which he displays in spiritual ones. Every subject on which he discourses, I might almost say, every sentence which he utters, receives a tincture from his piety. The Spirit dwelling in the heart, as on an altar, sanctifies, in some sort, whatever gift is placed upon it, and imparts to it a sacred character. His piety so modifies his learning, that the most religious might be edified; and his learning so adorns his piety, that the most sceptical might be convinced.

Contrary to the manner of some, he seldom speaks of religion to determined infidels. But, where it is possible, he rather joins in their subjects of discourse, only speaking in a Christian spirit. The unbelief of the head, he says, is mostly founded in the enmity of the heart; he therefore thinks the persuasion of the affections ought to co-operate with the conviction of the judgment. On this account he thinks it most

judicious, to let them feel the excellency of Christianity in its practical effects, before he recommends it as a general principle.

When he speaks to those who ask his advice, he is very careful to address each one according to his own degree of light. He thinks the work is often ruined by indiscreetly urging persons beyond the step the Divine Spirit is then pointing out to the conscience.

M. d'Alet has often in his mouth that text, "Cast not your pearls before swine." Though far indeed from comparing any individual of his fellow-creatures to those animals, yet he often calls the experiences of Christ's love his people's pearls, and says they should not be lightly cast before those who will not only trample them under foot, but will endeavour, by turning upon Christians with futile sophisms, to disturb their peace and comfort. He rather advises, that the common experiences of men, such as convictions of sin, repentance, &c., be dwelt on, till the fallow ground is fully broken up, and prepared to receive the seed of the kingdom.

What I have seen at Alet has convinced me that it is much more common and easy to speak well on religion, than to speak of temporal things at all times in a religious spirit.

The Bishop of Alet's repasts are truly Christian.

His table is moderate and frugal. Nay, I think I may add, that the whole of his household expenses are, evidently, self-denying: they, however, stop short of ascetic severity.

He eats but little himself. The bread at dinner is served up in six-ounce rolls. He seldom took more than half of one. Besides this, he either takes the wing of a fowl, or some small piece of meat, of a similar size, and a little soup.\* At the dessert he takes either a baked pear or a roasted apple, with a few almonds, which are in this country served up in the shell, just as walnuts are with us.

Some religious work is read during the repast. One of the clerks of the cathedral performs the office of lecturer. This he does standing, because it is the table of a bishop. He reads slowly and distinctly. The holy prelate listens the whole time with the docility of a child who attends to the voice of his master. His eyes are mostly bent downwards, with the greatest reverence, or else closed, with his head a little turned to the reader, that he may not lose one single syllable. On this account he never helps at his own table, unless it be handing fruit to the person next him. He is exceedingly exact in never allowing any dish to appear a second time at table. All the remnants are distributed to the poor. The bishop never suffers anything to be served by way of delicacy, the remains of which cannot be made in

some way beneficial to the necessitous, the sick, or the infirm. For the same reason, he insists on every thing being carved in the neatest and nicest manner, so that nothing may be rendered disgusting. People, he says, are but half charitable, who, whilst they supply the wants, never consider the feelings of others.

The bishop is so conscientiously exact in these particulars, that I never saw a fowl, or any poultry, or game, at his table, unless he knew of a sick neighbour, to whom the remains might be acceptable. Even then they were always presents from his friends; for he himself never bought anything but plain butcher's meat. On the same principle, no made dishes, second courses, or even removes, or pastry, are ever served up.

We could not help smiling at a little incident which occurred during our visit: the bishop is exceedingly particular on every occasion, in always employing some of his own flock in preference to sending to Paris. The bishop, a little while ago, wanted a cook; those in this remote province are miserably bad: the prelate, however, pursued his usual plan, and consequently got a very indifferent one. After a few weeks the man, who had been treated with the greatest kindness, gave warning; the bishop sent for him: — "What, my good friend, can be the cause of your leaving me?" "Sir,"

replied the man, "I have nothing to do all day long. I was ignorant enough when I came, but," added he, with great indignation, "I shall become fit for nothing at all, if I stay any longer at such a place as this."

The Bishop of Alet's table, often puts me in mind of some anecdotes, related by the Bishop of Bellay, concerning Cardinal Frederic Borromæo, nephew and successor to the great St. Charles, in the Archbishopric of Milan.

During the Bishop of Bellay's tour in Italy, he very frequently dined at the cardinal's house, and always found him a close imitator of the frugality and temperance of his uncle. His income is estimated at about fifty thousand crowns; with this sum he does so much for the Church and for the poor, that it might be imagined he had the riches of Cræsus. The foundation of that noble and magnificent institution, the Ambrosian library, is but a small sample of his munificence.

With regard to his own person, house, and furniture, nothing appears but what is indispensably necessary. He one day spoke to the Bishop of Bellay, with tears in his eyes, of the increasing luxury of the clergy. "Alas!" said he, "when will the Christian bishops conform to the wholesome regulations of the council of Trent? *When will the houses of the dignified clergy be recognised by seeing there*

*‘ frugalem mensam et pauperem supellectilem ? ’ the frugal table and mean furniture ? ”*

One day the Bishop of Bellay dined at Cardinal F. Borromæo’s with the Bishop of Vintimiglia and Count Charles Borromæo; it was on the 4th of November, 1616.

“ I had often heard,” said M. de Bellay, “ that the cardinal disapproved of seeing the starved poor naked at the doors of bishops, whilst their insensible walls were hung with the richest tapestry and velvet, and their tables groaned under the load of superfluous viands. Yet,” continued he, “ I was astonished at seeing nothing but bare whitewashed walls and wooden furniture. There were neither hangings nor any silk furniture throughout the whole house; everything was exceedingly nice and clean, but without any such thing as an ornament, except a few paintings from sacred history, the work of the first masters.

“ The dinner was served entirely without either plate or china; the plates, salt-stands, cruets, &c., were of white delf; the knives and forks were of the best steel; only the spoons and ladles were silver.

“ After grace, one of the cardinal’s almoners read in Scripture till dinner was half over; the remainder of the time was left for conversation.

“The first course consisted of an equal portion to each guest, as at religious houses: two deep covered dishes were set before every guest. In one were five or six spoonfuls of vermicelli, boiled in milk tinged with saffron. In the other was a very small boiled chicken floating in broth. This was the whole of the first course.

“The second, which might be termed the bulk of the feast, also consisted in like manner of two covered dishes each. The first contained three balls of chopped herbs, bread, and mince meat, about the size of a poached egg; the other dish consisted of a snipe, accompanied by an orange.

“Next succeeded two more dishes each, by way of dessert, one of which contained a remarkably small pear, ready peeled; the other a napkin very nicely folded, in the centre of which was a piece of Parmesan cheese, as large as a sixpenny piece.

“This was the whole of the dinner. No sooner was it ended than a finger-glass was brought to each, and rose and orange water poured over the hands of every guest.”

The Bishop of Bellay used however to add, that these Borromæan feasts were not in vogue with *all* the dignified prelates in Rome.

The Bishop of Alet never sits at dinner longer than half an hour, on any pretext whatever. As soon as



dinner is over, when the weather admits of it, he walks on the terrace, or in the garden. When any friends are staying with him, he mostly converses with them during his walk. If no subject arise, he occasionally gives orders relative to the culture of the garden, or the disposal of its produce amongst the poor.

When the weather is unfavourable, he sits with his friends a little after dinner. The bulk of the afternoon he devotes to the business of his diocese. If his friends be persons of sufficient piety and judgment, he frequently consults them. In his mode of transacting business, the bishop seems to be guided by wisdom, humility, and faith. The two former lead him to ask everybody's opinion whom he judges capable; the latter causes him to decide nothing without consulting Scripture, and laying the matter before GOD in prayer; by this rule he is steadily guided.

M. d'Alet told me that the Bible I had sent him was seldom out of his sight, and was always on his table; he often regrets that the Scriptures are so superficially perused, by those who make a religious profession: "*Many,*" he says, "*are well acquainted with the outline of religion, and can adduce texts in support of the general scheme of salvation, who have yet never given that minute attention to Scripture,*

*which is indispensably necessary to those who desire to be well versed in every part of the Christian practice.\**

“May we all,” says the good bishop, “become more and more of Bible Christians; as every branch of our faith is immutable, so may every part of our walk become more and more modelled by Scripture. We are commanded to eat, to drink, and to do all to the glory of GOD. Surely, then, the law of Christ should regulate all these things; for how but by that shall we know what is for His glory? The natural man knows as little of a Christian walk as of a Christian faith. *Though many professing Christians suppose they walk according to the mind of Christ in these respects, yet it is evident that they frame the rule in their own imaginations, and suppose it to be that of Christ, instead of truly studying the Scripture in every individual practice, and carefully tracing the connection between every precept and doctrine of the gospel.*

“One reason indeed for studying the Scripture is, that we may grow in the knowledge of GOD in Christ Jesus; another that we may be able to give an answer to every man concerning the hope which

\* The author regrets that the limits of this work compelled such an abridgment of the beautiful Port Royal Essay, “De la Nécessité d’une Loi de DIEU, qui régle jusqu’aux moindres de nos actions.” — It was written on occasion of M. d’Alet’s endeavours to circulate the Scriptures.

is in us: *but, let us remember, that a third, and not a less important one is, that the man of GOD may be thoroughly furnished to every good work.* THE OFFICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO APPLY SCRIPTURE TO THE HEART, AND NOT TO SUPERSEDE IT. This is a truth as essential as it respects a Christian walk, as with respect to a Christian faith.”\*

\* The high reverence which M. d’Alet entertained for the sacred Scriptures, was particularly manifested during a very dangerous illness, which in the year 1675 conducted him to the brink of the grave.

In September he was seized with a violent colic, to which he was occasionally subject. On the 3rd of October, it changed to a putrid fever of the most malignant nature. The most skilful physicians were called in, and especially M. Hamon, who was sent for express from Port Royal des Champs; but the virulence of the disease was such, that it seemed inclined neither to yield to time nor remedies. So that the bishop being given over by all his medical attendants, sent for his archdeacon, M. Ragot, to administer the last sacraments. The news of their pastor’s extremity being quickly spread all over the town, the magistrature, with an immense concourse of persons, of all ages and conditions, ran to the palace; and, bathed in tears, implored that they might be allowed to receive the last benediction of their dying father.

Meanwhile the whole chapter followed the blessed Eucharist, bearing lighted tapers.

On entering the sick room, the archdeacon had no sooner pronounced the words, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet Him,” than the venerable bishop, exhausted as he was, raised himself up in his bed, and on his knees adored. He answered distinctly, and with childlike simplicity, to every interrogation; all of which were put to him at his own desire, as to the very last and least of his flock. He then desired to make his profession of faith; observing, that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth would find utterance. He received the Holy Sacrament with all that

The Bishop of Alet is a great friend to self-denial and mortification, both external and internal. He thinks *many persons deceive themselves in supposing they take up the inward, whilst they refuse the outward cross.* He has very frequently in his mouth the words of our Lord. “*Agonize to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able.*” “*Surely,*” says M. d’Alet, “*this agonizing must as much relate to that vile body, which even St. Paul kept under, for fear of becoming a castaway, as to those high imaginations and tempers of soul which are to be brought down and subjected to the law of Christ.*”

The bishop is extremely abstemious. He is there-

recollection and devotion for which he was so much distinguished when officiating at the altar. Afterwards, endeavouring to collect the little remains of his exhausted strength, he made a sign to all the assembled multitude, who were weeping around; and silence being obtained, with solemn earnestness thus addressed them. “*My very dear friends, you behold me now upon the point of appearing before the awful tribunal of Jesus Christ. Every one of you also will one day be cited before it. My dear brethren, for the very last time I conjure and implore you, to live now, and from this very hour, in that manner in which you will wish to have lived, when you arrive at that state in which I this moment am. For five and thirty years I have borne you as a nurse does her tenderly beloved child; and what I have nourished you with has been the pure milk of the word of God. That word, my dear brethren, will be your judge. O then, I beseech you, let that blessed word be now the guide and rule of your conduct.*”

The venerable bishop, however, soon afterwards recovered from this illness.— See “*Vie d’Alet,*” tom. iii. pp. 48, 49, 50.

fore just as ready for business after dinner as before. He saves himself a great deal of perplexity, by rather aiming at acting on true principles, than at being anxious respecting consequences. I have observed, that he endeavours in every undertaking to keep close to GOD, in His Spirit, His Providence, and His Word. He never enters on any matter without prayer, nor unless both the ends and means are sanctioned by Scripture. Yet our Lord has shown him the necessity of wholly leaving the success to Him; and this enables him, when any error in his own judgment causes the thing to fail, to humble himself before the Lord, under that, as under other cross Providences. Thus he is enabled to bear his own mistakes with the same patience and resignation as those of others, and thus too everyone of his infirmities affords fresh source of humiliation in himself, and of rejoicing in the goodness of his Lord.

By this means M. d'Alet is favoured with a great deal of freedom from care and needless perplexity. Peace and serenity are written on his countenance. How seldom do we reflect, that the peace which passeth understanding is not only the privilege of Christians to enjoy, but that it is also one of those fruits of the Spirit by which they are distinguished who are the true children of GOD and joint-heirs with Christ. Even good men are too apt to let their peace be interrupted by dwelling on effects they

cannot command, instead of calmly reposing all by faith on Christ, whose promises stand on an immutable basis.

He attends with the greatest love and patience to all those who open to him their spiritual wants. *He, however, wishes to accustom them rather to seek aid of God, than of men.* In this respect, he follows the examples of M. de St. Cyran, of St. Austin, and of St. John. *He thinks the practice of constantly unbosoming ourselves to men creates religious gossiping, and extinguishes vital piety; and accustoms young believers to consider men as more necessary to them than God.* Frequently too, he thinks, that by creating human attachments, it weakens divine love. Jesus says, He is both the Alpha and Omega of Christianity. With Him then let us begin, as with Him we must end. From first to last all is of Him, and through Him. *He it is who is exalted, a Prince and a Saviour in Israel, to give repentance as well as remission of sins.* He it is who is come a great light into the world, that whosoever followeth Him, should not walk in darkness, but should have the light of life. He is the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the whole world; yea, that bore our sins in His own body on the tree. He is the Good Shepherd who goes before, and calls His sheep by name. He is the Good Physician, who makes whole those who touch the hem of His garment; and the residue of



the Spirit is with Him. *Whatever then may be our wants from first to last, we must come to Him.* However vile we may be, we must resolve to come to Him; for He expressly terms Himself the door, through which we must *enter*, if we would find pasture. He has promised that He will not cast out, but will save to the uttermost, those who come to GOD by Him; and He has declared, that there is no name given under heaven by which men can be saved, but by that which is given; Emmanuel, GOD with us, GOD manifest in the flesh, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

When M. d'Alet gives pastoral instructions, he does it, as nearly as possible, in Scripture language. *The road to the kingdom he observes is narrow. It is best taught in Scripture language, for the glosses of men do but widen it.*

I never knew a man so well versed in sacred writ. He is quite an Apollos, mighty in the Scriptures. He quotes the originals as familiarly as we do the vulgate. And on whatever subject he speaks, he seems to have all the parallel passages before him.

M. d'Alet's patience, both in illness and under the faults of others, is exceedingly great. He seems, through mercy, continually kept low at the foot of the cross. He is favoured with a deep sense of his own unworthiness, and of his merciful Saviour's infinite condescension and long suffering towards him; by



this means he is enabled, from the heart, to forgive others, and to think all too good for him.

One day being exceedingly heated by preaching, he returned to the palace to rest himself. The archdeacon was with him. The porter had always strict orders never to keep anyone waiting at the gate: nevertheless, they repeatedly knocked in vain. It was in the depth of winter. After a full quarter of an hour had elapsed, the archdeacon, who feared the consequences for M. d'Alet, began to grow angry. "Softly, my dear friend," replied the bishop, "*we indeed see he does not come, but we do not yet know the reasons that detain him.*"

PART II.

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*Continuation of Launcelot's Letter to la Mère Angélique de St. Jean, Abbess of Port Royal. The conversion of the Abbé de Rancé, and the reformation of La Trappe.*

DURING the last thirty years, it is astonishing how many persons have applied to M. d'Alet, respecting their spiritual concerns. Some of the most eminently pious characters in the present century have been formed under his direction. You well know the part he took in the conversion of Madame de la Duchesse de Longueville, and the Prince and Princess of Conti. Their high rank equally extended M. d'Alet's celebrity, and aggravated his disgrace and persecutions.

Perhaps, however, the most remarkable character under the direction of M. d'Alet, (or of almost any other) is the celebrated Dom Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé, the regular Abbot, reformer

and first institutor of the astonishing austerities of La Trappe.

I heard a variety of anecdotes concerning him, whilst here, which I think may be relied on. His character is so singular, and the circumstances by which it was unfolded so remarkable, and, I will add, that the institution to which it gave birth is so wonderful, that I cannot refrain from setting down all I have been able to collect; though I fear, even now, my letter is large enough to fill M. de Brienne's pocket book.

Dom Armand Jean le Bouthillier de Rancé de Chavigni, was born at Paris, on the 9th of January, 1626. He was nephew to Claude le Bouthillier de Chavigni, Secretary of State, and Comptroller of the Finances. He was of a very ancient house in Brittany. His ancestors were formerly cup-bearers to the Dukes of Brittany. Hence it was they assumed the name of Bouthillier. Cardinal Richelieu was godfather to M. de Rancé. Mary of Médicis honoured him as he grew up, with her peculiar protection, and he was a knight of Malta from his early youth.

From his very childhood his figure was singularly noble, and his countenance remarkably beautiful. He was above the common stature. His features were on the finest model of Roman beauty. His hair of a beautiful auburn, curled with profusion

over his shoulders. He united regular beauty, and masculine strength, to an expression of vigorous intellect, delicacy of taste, acute sensibility, and noble and generous passions. No one could see him without admiration.

His talents were as remarkable as his beauty. At eleven, he arranged a new Greek edition of Anacreon's Odes, with notes of his own composing. It was published before he was twelve. M. de Rancé's paternal inheritance was very considerable. His ecclesiastical benefices were still more so. He was designed to succeed his uncle in the archbishopric of Tours. By a common abuse, he enjoyed the emoluments, even during his childhood. From the *Belles Lettres*, he proceeded to the study of Theology. He took up all his degrees at the Sorbonne, with the greatest distinction. Nevertheless, the Abbé de Rancé forms a melancholy instance, how the head may be enlightened, whilst the heart still remains altogether dead in trespasses and sins. The pride of the universities of Paris and Sorbonne; the fame of his talents, erudition, fortune, birth, beauty, eloquence, and accomplished manners, was spread throughout all France. Yet his heart was abandoned in secret to almost every species of disorder. To all those at least which the world deems not incompatible with honour. That part of his time, which was most innocently employed, was con-

sumed at public places of amusement, or in hunting, and in company. The immense revenues of his ecclesiastical benefices, were destroyed by deep gaming, and by every species of extravagance most inconsistent with his sacred profession.

De Rancé gave an unbridled loose to all his passions and inclinations. He seemed for a time, equally averse from the duties of his religious profession, and from every useful and honourable mode of employing his exalted talents.

In vain were the remonstrances of his friends. His wit and unfailing good humour always found means to parry all their attacks. Too often he even made his crying sins appear amiable to those whose duty it was to reprove them. Thus his heart remained obdurate as adamant, and slippery as polished marble. He continued in this course of life some years. At length GOD, the father of mercies, interfered in his behalf; but instead of persuading him, as heretofore, through the medium of his friendly advisers, He spoke to him through the instrumentality of one of His most awful and affecting providences.

Ambition had always been the distinguished characteristic of M. de Rancé. In several of his projects he was disappointed. He had formed an intimate friendship with the Cardinal de Retz, and quarrelled with the Cardinal Mazarin on his ac-

count. The misfortunes of the Cardinal de Retz, and the premature death of Gaston, Duke of Orleans, deeply affected him.

A failure in one or two plans, undertaken on behalf of his friends, gave him a sensible mortification. He quitted Paris in disgust: and retired to his seat at Veret. Though it is probable these incidents led to the first beginnings of his subsequent conversion; yet they were not, at that time, effectually responded to through divine grace. The seeds remained dormant for a season, and it was not till some time after, that they germinated and brought forth the peaceable fruits of holiness. The Abbé de Rancé was a disappointed, not an altered man. Foiled in the object of his wishes, he bade adieu for a season to literature; and collecting his gayest friends around him, sought to drown his disappointment at the table, and to dissipate his sorrow at the chase.

Other circumstances also have been alleged, as the true though secret causes of M. de Rancé's conversion. They are indeed romantic, but they are not at all improbable, and though they have been passed over in silence or expressly denied by some respectable biographers, I will yet relate them as reports, which have been so widely circulated as to have found their way repeatedly into print.

Amongst other objects, wholly incompatible with

his sacred functions and vocation, it is said he had formed a most ardent attachment to a lady who was highly accomplished. Though restricted by his ordination from marriage, he had persuaded both himself and her, that the cultivation of their mutual affection by frequent visits and correspondence, was entirely free from objection. She reposed as much confidence in his opinion, as she felt charmed by his society. It happened, that in autumn he had proposed taking a shooting excursion of a few weeks, and terminating it by a visit at her father's house. He was accompanied by one of his gay companions, to whom he never scrupled to converse with great latitude on religious subjects. As they were roaming together over the mountains, their discourse took the usual turn. The Abbé, goaded by the remembrance of his late disappointment, gave no bounds to the freedom of his observations. He even seemed, at times, doubtful of a particular Providence, and let fall some expressions so improper, that his companion was shocked. He reminded him that he was a minister of the Gospel, and that the GOD whom he denied might one day call him to a severe account. The Abbé shrugged up his shoulders with a contemptuous smile. They were both silent. Almost at that very moment, the sudden report of a gun was heard; and a ball from some unseen hand, struck the Abbé de Rancé's



belt. The blow bent in the buckle of his belt, and the ball fell harmless at his feet. This circumstance saved his life. The Abbé's mind was deeply impressed by this occurrence, with the reality of a particular Providence, though he had too much pride to confess his sins and too much obduracy of heart to return at once to God, yet he was exceedingly thoughtful and silent all the remainder of his tour.

He seemed to feel that his life was not what it should be, and that GOD had shown infinite mercy in forbearing with him so long. The rest of his journey was occupied in forming resolutions of reformation, although he still did not appear to be struck with the culpability of his conduct relative to the lady he was proceeding to visit. It was late in the evening when he arrived, and the house was consequently shut up. He knocked several times, but in vain. He then recollected a little back door leading to a private staircase, by which the family often let themselves in. Wishing agreeably to surprise his friends, he fastened his horse, and went in. He eagerly ran up the staircase. At the top of which was a little library dressing-room, in which the Duchess and her father mostly sat. After tapping at the door, and hearing no reply, he softly opened it. The first object that struck his eyes was her corpse, stretched in a coffin, and prepared for

burial. The countenance was ghastly to look upon. The teeth set, and the lips drawn back, told, amidst the silence of death, that the last moments had witnessed an horrible conflict of body or of soul. The eyes wide open and glazed by death, were immovably fixed upon him as he entered the room; and the dreadful conviction shot across his heart, as though a voice had spoken it, "This soul *thou* hast eternally lost."

His agony of mind was indescribable. In vain did her friends attempt to soothe him by relating the circumstances of her short illness and her sudden death. The words "Eternally lost! eternally! eternally!" seemed perpetually sounding in his ears. For a short time he seemed almost frantic. He wrung his hands, and rolled on the floor, writhing with agony. "Oh that I could but suffer the torments, even of hell itself, for thousands of years, if at last I could but deliver her soul!—O that I had been faithful!—O that I could suffer for, or with her!—But it is past!—The time which I might have helped her is fatally, irrevocably past!—She once sought GOD, and I misled her!"—Such were some of his expressions. They sufficiently show the misery of his awakened conscience and of a soul horrified with remorse.\*

\* The romantic part of this story is disbelieved at La Trappe, and is denied in express terms by Meaupeau, the friend of M. de Rancé.

To this state of frantic despair succeeded a deep melancholy. He sent away all his friends, and shut himself up at his mansion at Veret; where he would not see a creature. His whole soul seemed to be absorbed by a deep and inconsolable grief. Shut up in a single room, he even forgot to eat and drink; and when the servant reminded him it was bed time, he started as from a deep reverie, and seemed unconscious that it was not still morning. When he was better, he would wander in the woods, for hours together, wholly regardless of the weather. A faithful servant, who sometimes followed him by stealth, often watched him standing for hours together in one place, the snow and rain beating on his head; whilst he, unconscious of it, was wholly absorbed in painful recollections. Then at the fall of a leaf, or the noise of the deer, he would awake, as from a slumber, and wringing his hands, hasten to bury himself in a thicker part of the wood, or else throw

This history, which has obtained such general currency, was first published in the "Causes Véritables de la Conversion de l'Abbé de la Trappe," in 1685, Cologne, by Daniel de La Roque; and was re-published in the "Dictionnaire Historique" of 1804, and also in that of 1814. It is also given in a note to "Les Causes Célèbres et Intéressantes;" published at the Palais, with the name of the Duchesse de Monbazon at full length; and a sonnet purporting to have been written on the occasion by the Abbé; and it is also mentioned in the "Pièces Historiques de la Trappe." These works are mentioned, not by way of establishing its truth, but only as the sources from which it was inserted in these pages.

himself prostrate with his face in the snow, and groan bitterly.

Thus the winter wore away in hopeless despondency, or black despair. As spring advanced, he appeared somewhat better. Though unable to resume any avocation, he walked out oftener, and seemed more conscious of surrounding objects.

On one of the brightest days in May he was wandering, in his usual disconsolate manner, amongst the wooded mountains that skirted his estate. Suddenly he came to a deep glen, which terminated in a narrow valley. It was covered with rich green herbage, and was surrounded, on all sides, with thick woods. A flock was feeding in the bottom, and a clear brook watered it. Underneath the broad shade of a spreading oak sat an aged shepherd, who was attentively reading a book. His crook and pipe were lying on the bank near him, and his faithful dog was guarding his satchel at his feet. The Abbé was much struck with his appearance. His locks were white with age, yet a venerable and cheerful benignity appeared in his countenance. His clothes were worn completely threadbare, and patched with different colours, but they were wonderfully neat and clean. His brow was furrowed by time; but as he lifted his eyes from the book, they seemed almost to beam with the expression of heart-felt peace and innocency. Notwithstanding his mean

garb, the Abbé de Rancé involuntarily felt a degree of respect and kindness for the man. "My good friend," said he, with a tone of affectionate sympathy, "you seem very poor, and at a very advanced age; can I render your latter days more comfortable?"

The old man looking at him stedfastly, but with the greatest benignity, replied, "I humbly thank you, Sir, for your kindness. Did I stand in need of it, I should most gratefully accept it; but, blessed be GOD, His mercy and goodness have left me nothing even to wish."

"Nothing to wish!" replied M. de Rancé (who began to suspect his shepherd's garb to be a disguise), "I shall suspect you of being a greater philosopher than any I know! even Diogenes could not be easy, unless Alexander stood out of his light. Think again."

"Sir," replied the shepherd mildly, "this little flock, which you see, I love as if it were my own, though it belongs to another. GOD has put it in my master's heart to show me kindness more than I deserve. I love to sit here and meditate on all the goodness and mercies of GOD to me in this life; and above all I love to read and meditate on his glorious promises for that which is to come. I assure you, Sir, that whilst I watch my sheep, I receive many a sweet lesson of the Good Shepherd's

watchful care over me, and all of us. What can I wish, Sir, more?"

"But my good man," returned the Abbé, "did it never come into your head, that your master may change, or your flock may die. Should you not like to be independent, instead of trusting to fortuitous circumstances?"

"Sir," replied the shepherd, "I look upon it, that I do not depend on circumstances; but on the great and good GOD who directs them. This it is that makes me happy, happy at heart. GOD in mercy enables me to lie down, and sleep securely, on the immutable strength of that blessed promise, 'All things shall work together for good, to them that love GOD.' My reliance, being poor, is on the love of GOD; if I were ever so rich, I could not be more secure; for on what else but on His will can the most flourishing prospects depend for their stability?" —

The Abbé felt some emotion at this pointed observation; he however smothered it, and said, "Very few have your firmness of mind."

"Sir," returned the man, "you should rather say, few seek their strength from GOD." Then steadily fixing his eyes on M. de Rancé, he added, "Sir, it is not firmness of mind. I know misfortune, as well as others; and I know too, that where affliction comes close, no firmness of mind only, can or will



carry a man through. However strong a man may be, affliction may be yet stronger, unless his strength be in the strength of GOD. Again, Sir, it is not firmness of mind. But it is a firm and heartfelt conviction, founded on Scripture, and experience of GOD'S mercy, in Christ. It is faith, and that faith itself is the gift of GOD."

The man paused; then looking at M. de Rancé with great interest, he added, "Sir, your kindness calls for my gratitude. Permit me to shew it in the only way I can. Then I will add, that if you do not yet know this gift, he calls *you* to it as much as me. I see by your countenance, that though so young, you have known sorrow. Would to GOD you could read on mine, that, though at so advanced and infirm an age, I enjoy the blessing of peace. Though you are probably learned, whilst I am unlearned, I believe that the secret of true happiness is the same to all. Let me then show my gratitude, by telling you what the teaching of GOD by His Word and Providence, has been to me. I was not always blessed with the happiness I now enjoy. When I was young, I had a farm of my own. I had a wife, whom I dearly loved, and I was blessed with sweet children. Yet with all these good things I was never happy, for I knew not GOD, the supreme good. With every temporal blessing, I never reaped pure enjoyment, for my affections were never



in due subordination. My eyes being turned to the channels of temporal blessings, instead of to GOD their source, I was in a continual anxiety, either to grasp more, or lest I should lose what I had already got. GOD had compassion upon me, and in mercy sent misfortune to lead me to Him. I once had a son, the pride of my heart; a daughter, the friend and idol of her mother. Each was grown up, and began to yield us comfort beyond our fondest hopes, when each we had successively to watch through a slow and lingering disease. Blessed be GOD, who taught them to live the life of His saints, and gives them now, as the angels in heaven, to behold His face in glory. They were taught, but not of us; it was the work of GOD: of that GOD, whom as yet we knew not. Their deaths — but, O! how unspeakably bitter was the pang — only came in mercy to call us to GOD, and give us spiritual life! Till we fainted under the stroke, we did not remember that our insensible hearts had never yet been thankful for the blessings, at whose loss we were ready to repine. We can now in mercy say, that we know afflictions do not spring out of the dust, nor sorrow from the ground. Blessed be GOD, I can now from my very heart thank Him, for uniting me, through all the ages of a blissful eternity, with those dear and angelic spirits towards whom I had only entertained the affections of nature, circumscribed by the limits

of time. O how short my views! how long His love! surely His mercy, and the fruit of it, endureth for ever. This was our greatest affliction; besides this, I have, through a variety of accidents, lost my relations and my possessions, and I now, in my old age, serve in the house where I was once master. Yet I find that to know the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent, is indeed life eternal. A man's life does not consist in the abundance which he possesses; but in that peace which passeth all understanding; and which the world can neither give nor take away. I desire to live by faith, day by day, and trust to the Lord to provide for the morrow. In short, Sir, I have found by experience, that every worldly gift without GOD is empty, and that GOD without any worldly good is, as of old, all-sufficient."

This discourse, which has, however, been variously related, struck\* M. de Rancé to the very heart. It was as a ray of light from above, and he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

These circumstances, together with several others, which occurred about the same period, were, I understand, the real causes of that astonishing revolution which took place in the mind and heart of M. de Rancé.

\* This discourse is *not* accurately related: but the substratum of it is mentioned in various accounts of M. de Rancé.

A deep sense of the supreme majesty and holiness of GOD, and of his own utter unworthiness, seemed at once to rush upon his mind, and to cover him with terror and confusion. The language of his inmost soul was, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; I utterly abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

The glorious perfections of GOD, and his adorable nature, together with all his own enormities, and his own sinful nature, seemed gathered in battle-array around him. Like the cherubim's sword, their keen edge met him on every side. His heart was full of sore amazement, and sunk within him. For a season he appeared completely overwhelmed with the awful sense of his guilt. He shut himself up for many months, scarcely daring to taste any of the temporal blessings around him. He felt himself unworthy of light or life. Immured in one darkened room, and scarcely allowing himself food enough to support life, he spent his time in the most rigorous austerities, and the most sanguinary macerations; hoping, in some measure to appease the wrath of GOD, before he dared to ask for mercy. Still his despair continued unabated.

In this distress he wrote to M. d'Alet, and laid open the state of his soul, describing his remorse and despair in the most distressing and hopeless language. M. d'Alet, as a wise director, immediately pointed

out to him the Lamb of GOD, who taketh away the sins of the world; and who has tasted death for every man. He at once led him to the good Physician, who alone can heal the sin-sick soul, and who has said, "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

M. de Rancé did not need much persuasion. He had long been weary and heavy laden. With deep humility and thankfulness, he cast his guilty soul upon the atoning blood of Christ. By faith he laid hold on the only hope set before him, and he soon found that GOD was a GOD of love, as well as of truth; of mercy, as well as of holiness. The Spirit of GOD witnessed with his spirit that he was a son of GOD: and he received the Spirit of adoption, enabling him to cry Abba, FATHER; and the peace of GOD, which passeth all understanding, continually kept his heart and mind, in the knowledge and love of GOD, and of Jesus Christ his Lord.

Thus was M. de Rancé called out of darkness into GOD's marvellous light. Thus was he delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of GOD's dear Son.

The good tree of the planting of the Lord was soon known by its fruits.

Deeply was he humbled at the shameful use he had made of his ecclesiastical revenues. He instantly

resolved to part with every one of them, and to bestow them on the most pious men in France. All his paternal estates he likewise determined to dispose of; and to lay out the money, as far as it would go, in charitable purposes, that he might as far as was in his power, make restitution for the revenues of the church which he had so scandalously abused. He accordingly parted with his noble estate of Veret, in Touraine, and vested the money in l'Hôtel Dieu, and other charities. Veret was the most magnificent estate in Touraine, and one of the finest in all France.

Of all his ecclesiastical benefices he only reserved to himself the single abbacy of La Trappe. Of this monastery he had long been the commendatory abbot; that is, he had long borne the name of abbot, and received the emoluments; though only one of the secular clergy, and though the whole direction was conducted by the prior. He resolved no longer to continue to receive a stipend for an office which he did not himself fulfil; and he therefore determined to enter himself amongst the regular clergy, to embrace the monastic life, and to become the regular abbot of La Trappe.

The monastery of La Trappe is of considerable antiquity: it belongs to that branch of the order of St. Bennet, which has adopted the rule of Citeaux.

To give some idea of this celebrated penitential

seclusion, it will be necessary to say a few words on the institution of the order which gave it birth.

St. Bennet was born in the year 480, in the district of Nursia, in the duchy of Spoleto. His father's name was Eutropius; his mother's, Abundantia. They were noble and pious. Scarcely was he born, when, with reiterated prayers and supplications, they devoted him to GOD, and with tears and bended knees, implored His peculiar blessing on this their only child. In full assurance of faith, that their prayers had been heard, they gave him by anticipation, the name of Benedictus (blessed), which his maturer years so fully justified. He was sent to Rome, for the purpose of finishing his education. He was shocked at the corruptions prevalent amongst every rank of society; and above all, he was disgusted to see that even youth were not untainted by dissipation. Grieved to the heart, he suddenly took a resolution to renounce the world, and to spend his life in prayer for those who forgot to implore the divine mercy for themselves.

He secretly quitted the scenes which had so strongly excited his disgust, and retired to a desert, named Sublacci, about forty miles from Rome. Here he concealed himself in a dark and desolate cavern amongst the rocks, for three years. This cave was situated in the side of a lofty mountain. The mouth being overgrown with thick brushwood, was imper-



ceptible, either from the projecting brows of rock above, or from the valley below, and a river which wound round the base of the mountain, effectually precluded all access. Here St. Bennet passed his days in the most profound solitude. Prayer, meditation, and study, divided his time. His food was the wild fruit of the desert; his refreshment, the mountain streams. His garments were the skins of wild beasts. One friend alone knew of his retreat; faithful to his trust, he never invaded his repose himself, or communicated his secret to another. One day in a month St. Romanus retired to the summit of the rock above the hermitage, and winding a huntsman's horn, gave notice to his friend of his approach; then, standing at the edge of the rock, he let down, by a cord, a basket containing bread, vegetables, a little wine, and also some books. On receiving this fresh supply, St. Bennet regularly put up those books he had already perused, and the basket was drawn up again. Afterwards, the two saints waving their hands to each other, knelt down, the one at the entrance of his cell, the other on the mountain, and fervently poured forth their hearts in prayer for each other. Then rising, each again waved a farewell, and departed till the ensuing month. For three years was this secret inviolably kept. At the end of the fourth, a hunting party, who were pursuing their game in the recesses of the



mountains, discovered his retreat; St. Bennet was asleep when they entered his cell. Clad in the skin of a bear, they at first took him for some wild beast of the desert. On rising and entering into conversation with him, they were much struck by his sanctity. They implored his benediction, and spread over the whole country a report of the treasure they had discovered. The inhabitants of the district flocked to his cell. It was said that another John the Baptist had arisen in the desert, and all the people came forth confessing their sins; even children seemed anxious to have a share in his prayers, and to participate in his instructions. A surprising reformation took place in the whole neighbourhood.

His celebrity grew more extensive every day, and his reputation for piety was hourly more exalted. Tradition relates, that at the voice of his prayer the elements became still, and the laws of nature were diverted from their course; and it has been said, that at his venerable yet youthful aspect, the wild beasts of the desert would forget their wonted ferocity, and crouch down at the feet of a man, in whose eye they beheld the power of their Maker. Such traditions sufficiently prove the esteem in which St. Bennet was held. His converts were so numerous, that he founded twelve monasteries not far from Sublacci; for them he composed his celebrated rule. After establishing these religious houses, he left his

retreat and went to Cassini. This town is situated on the side of a steep mountain. The inhabitants were at that time idolaters; they were converted by the preaching of St. Bennet. Their temple, dedicated to Apollo, was soon converted into a Christian church. He established a monastery at Mount Cassini, which he himself superintended many years. This monastery is properly the mother of the Benedictine order, which soon spread with the name of its founder into every part of Europe.

Even Totila, king of the Goths, who was passing through Campania, came to pay him a visit. Benedict spoke to him as a Christian; accustomed both in his words and actions, to forget men, and to see alone Him who is invisible, he spread before Totila all his sins, and urged him to repentance and restitution. The Goth trembled. We do not hear that he was converted to GOD; but it is said, that he was far less sanguinary after this interview; and that, like Herod, he did many things. In less than a year after, St. Bennet died. He departed on the 21st of March, 543, at the age of sixty-three.

Such was the life of St. Benedict, the founder of the celebrated Benedictine order. An order which (although it did not form a rapid extension till the 8th century) has since that time spread over the whole Latin church, and extended its ramifications into the remotest corners of the west. An order,

which has in extent and celebrity far exceeded every other ; which has been equally useful by the important services it has rendered to civil society and to literature ; and which the archives of the order record to have given the church 40 popes, 200 cardinals, 50 patriarchs, 1600 archbishops, 4600 bishops, and 3000 canonised saints. So says the chronicle of the order ; it should, however, be observed, that the learned Mabillon retrenches several of the saints from the catalogue.

The four grand orders in the Latin church, are the Augustinian, Dominican, Franciscan, and Benedictine. Of these, the latter is by far the most celebrated. The three first of these religious orders are Friars : the latter only are Monks. The Friars (*fratres or brethren*) may be termed societies, formed of religious men ; whose object is to withdraw from the world, in order to enjoy religious fellowship, and reap spiritual instruction together. The Monks (*monachi or solitaries*) may be defined, men whose object is to worship GOD in solitude, apart from all human society ; men who, whilst they reside in one house, from the necessity of providing mutual subsistence, are yet as much separated from each other's intercourse as though the antipodes divided them. The houses of the first are termed convents, those of the latter monasteries. The first, as the name imports, implies a society of brethren coming together,

whilst the latter denotes a cluster of independent and isolated recluses.

St. Bennet probably bore in mind the hermits of Egypt, and the monks of the eastern church, in the institution of his order. His objects were, however, more useful; and the means he made choice of better adapted to human nature, and to secure the benefits of civil society.

Whilst the eighty thousand hermits who peopled the deserts of Egypt, and the monks of Palestine, consumed their lives in fruitless contemplations; the recluses of the western churches were commanded not only to seek the salvation of their own souls, but to labour with their heads and hands for the benefit of society. Seven hours every day are devoted to manual or mental exertion. Seven more to religious services and contemplation. Four hours are regularly appropriated to religious studies. The six remaining suffice for food and sleep. The industry of the Benedictines soon proved a source of that opulence for which the order has been so much censured; and opulence soon drew after it the attendant evils of luxury and relaxation. Yet amidst all its abuses, society is, on the whole, highly indebted to the institution of St. Bennet.

Whilst prostrate Europe was desolated by the ravages of the Huns, the Goths, and the Vandals, the Benedictine monasteries alone opened their

hospitable doors, and afforded a safe and venerated asylum, amidst the surrounding horrors of barbarism ; nor did their usefulness cease when tranquillity was at length restored. During the Cimmerian darkness of the middle ages, the cloisters of St. Bennet were the alone repositories of classic lore, and the monks were the faithful and only guardians of the literary treasures of ancient Greece and Rome. To them we are indebted for all the originals or transcriptions of the works of the ancients, and also for the only histories extant of their own times. Nor do we alone owe them literary obligations. The restoration of agriculture originated with them ; and to their almost unassisted labour Europe owed its culture during a long succession of barbarous and warlike ages.

Many flourishing towns and proud cities which formerly only presented bare rocks or dark forests, are now grown fertile and habitable by their pious and laborious hands ; and some of the most luxuriant provinces of Europe received the first furrows of the plough, accompanied by the hymns of the Benedictine fathers ; and various of our most famed commercial marts were retreats consecrated by them to prayer.

The Benedictine Order soon acquired extensive influence ; they were beloved for their beneficence, respected for their learning, and revered for their piety. In addition too to their influence, immense

donations and personal industry soon exalted them to vast opulence. The rule of St. Bennet, which in the fifth century was submitted to by the few who were distinguished for eminent sanctity, was, in the eighth century, resorted to by the ambitious, as the easiest road to preferment; by the avaricious, as the richest source of emolument; and by the negligent and indolent, as offering a means of luxurious and slothful subsistence.

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the declension had attained such a pitch, that, whilst the order and emoluments of the Benedictines still remained, their salutary rule was wholly disregarded. Their name and riches alone distinguished them from the world.

GOD, however, reserves to Himself a people in every age, and His servants will ever show their abhorrence of the spirit of the world, by coming out from amongst it, and being separate. Towards the middle and end of the eleventh century, several good men were raised up, who began to testify against the abuses of the religious; and who endeavoured to lead back the professors of godliness through faith to a life of holiness. Peter, the venerable abbot of Clugni, Robert d'Arbrissel, the self-denying founder of Fontevraud, and Norbert de Premontré were all in their day preachers of righteousness.



Amidst the constellation of eminent men who rose at this period, several lights began to be kindled amongst the cloisters of the Benedictines. St. Bruno, St. Robert de Molesme, and various other excellent men, both in this and succeeding ages, witnessed with grief the declension of religion in their order. Living in remote countries or ages, they had no communication with each other, but were taught by GOD alone. Being converted themselves, each undertook to use every endeavour to restore the order to its pristine purity; and each added, as circumstances directed, many new statutes and customs to the original rule. Thus each of these good men became the founder of a secondary order; all of which, whilst they belonged to the rule of St. Bennet, yet differed in many of their own peculiar and subordinate observances. By this means the grand order of Benedictines includes a vast variety of distinct genera. Amongst some of the most celebrated are the Carthusians, founded by St. Bruno; the Camaldules, the Carmelites, the Celestins, the Monks of Grammont, the learned congregation of St. Maur, and the order of Cisteaux or Cistertians; to which last belongs the convent of La Trappe.

The Cistertian Order was founded in 1075, by St. Robert, abbot of Molesme, in Burgundy. Himself and twenty-one of his monks being deeply convinced of the degeneracy of their order, resolved,



by divine grace, to dedicate their hearts wholly to GOD ; and literally to follow the rule of their convent, in the strictest observance of St. Bennet's code. Expelled on this account by their nonconforming brethren, they retired, with their abbot, to a wilderness called Citeaux (*anciently Cisteaux, Lat. Cistercium*), on account of the aqueducts and reservoirs in its neighbourhood. This desert, which is about sixteen miles from Dijon, presented nothing but a vast forest, intermixed by dreary commons ; it was haunted by bears, foxes, and wolves, and infested by bands of assassins. Here the first monastery of the Cistercian order arose, under the auspices of Eudo, the first Duke of Burgundy. In the beginning they simply adhered to the rule of St. Bennet ; it was not till some years after, that St. Stephen, their then abbot — the friend, instructor, and spiritual father of the great St. Bernard — framed the new statutes and constitutions of the Cistercian Order. An Englishman by birth, his high rank and education were concealed by the deepest humility and the most childlike simplicity ; weaned from the world himself, all the articles of the new institute breathed his own spirit of self-denial. Silence, poverty, and renunciation of self, reigned in every part of his establishment. Their crosses were of unhewn wood, their censers of copper, and their lamps of iron. All the ornaments of the church were of coarse woollen,

and the monastery itself resembled a collection of miserable huts. One of their statutes was, that they should never receive any donations but from those whom they believed to be truly religious. Their revenues were consequently exceedingly limited. Reduced to subsist on the labour of their own hands, it was long before the ungrateful soil yielded any increase adequate to their wants. The primitive fathers of the Cistercian Institutes often sat down to a dinner of parched acorns and beech nuts; and their collation was wild sorrel and nuts which spontaneously grew in the forest. Thus the statutes of Cisteaux as far exceeded in austerity those of St. Bennet, as the original Institute of St. Bennet surpassed that of other religious houses. The monastery of La Trappe was one of the most ancient abbeys of the Cistercian order. Scarcely, however, had a few centuries elapsed, when the same relaxation which had pervaded the order of St. Bennet, also spread its baneful influence over that of Citeaux. Human nature is the same in every age, and under every circumstance. Nor can the propensities of the fallen soul ever be arrested by any system of human regulations, till the heart itself be thoroughly renewed by an operation of divine power. Even the divine precepts and rules of scripture can only point out the road. The law given by GOD Himself, is only a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths;

but the knowledge of Christ, and Him crucified, by an experimental faith, is alone the wisdom of GOD, and the power of GOD unto salvation. What Christ has done *for us*, can alone draw us near to GOD; and what He does *in us*, can alone enable us to keep a conscience void of offence. When the law of God itself professes only to give the knowledge of sin, vain indeed must it be for any human regulations to expect to work righteousness. Thus the monastic rule, which so many men of true piety have found a valuable help, has proved to others wholly nugatory and insufficient, when rested in for strength, or for a ground of acceptance with GOD. As no rule can quicken the soul dead in trespasses and sins, so no rule can maintain it in spiritual life. GOD alone can be the means of holding our soul in life. The same faith by which the Saviour is received into the heart can alone maintain Him there, who is indeed the resurrection and the life.

*The same faith by which we receive Christ, alone can enable us to walk in Him.*

Such was the state of the Cistercian order, at the period when M. de Rancé determined to become the regular abbot of the monastery of La Trappe.

This celebrated abbey was one of the most ancient belonging to the order of Citeaux. It was established by Rotrou, the second Count of Perche, and undertaken to accomplish a vow made whilst

in peril of shipwreck. In commemoration of this circumstance the roof is made in the shape of the bottom of a ship inverted. It was founded in the twelfth century, and was therefore coeval with the great St. Bernard, the first abbot of Clairvaux. This extraordinary man, whose zeal, whose piety, whose beauty, gave him such influence in France, was celebrated in all Europe for the prominent part he bore in preaching the crusades. Nor was he less renowned for the multitude of miracles tradition ascribes to him. He was, indeed, the Thaumaturgus of the twelfth century. Under his auspices the monastery of La Trappe was first founded.\* Many ages, however, had elapsed since its first institution; at the time M. de Rancé undertook its superintendence, it exhibited a melancholy and awful picture of the general declension. Its state was corrupt indeed, almost beyond belief.

Whilst M. de Rancé was projecting plans of the strictest reform, his friends with one voice dissuaded him from an undertaking, which they believed equally hopeless and dangerous.

The monks of La Trappe were not merely immersed in luxury and sloth, but they were abandoned

\* It was established under the pontificate of Innocent II. and in the reign of Louis VII. in the year 1140. It was therefore built forty-two years after the foundation of Citeaux, and twenty-five after Clairvaux.

to the most shameful and scandalous excesses. Most of them lived by robbery, and several had committed assassinations on the passengers who had occasion to traverse their woods. The neighbourhood shrunk with terror from the approach of men, who never went abroad unarmed, and whose excursions were marked with bloodshed and violence. The banditti of La Trappe, was the appellation by which they were most generally distinguished.

Such were the men among whom M. de Rancé resolved to fix his future abode. Unarmed, and unassisted, but in the panoply of GOD, and by His Spirit, he went alone amidst this company of ruffians, every one of whom was bent on his destruction. With undaunted boldness, he began by proposing the strictest reform, and not counting his life dear to him, he described the full extent of his purpose, and left them no choice but obedience or expulsion.

Many were the dangers M. de Rancé underwent. Plans were formed at various times to poison him, to way-lay, assassinate, and even once one of his monks shot at him; but the pistol, though applied close to his head, flashed in the pan, and missed fire. By the good providence of GOD all these plans were frustrated, and M. de Rancé not only brought this reform to bear, but several of his most zealous persecutors became his most stedfast adherents. Many were, after a short time, won over

by his piety, and by the Spirit of GOD striving in their hearts. The others left the monastery. Of these, several afterwards returned completely altered characters. The one especially who shot at M. de Rancé, became eminent for distinguished piety and learning. He was afterwards sub-prior of La Trappe. This man proved one of M. de Rancé's most attached friends, and one of his greatest comforts. He lived many years a monument of the divine blessing which accompanies forbearance, even to the vilest characters, and under the greatest provocations.\*

The same ardour and vehemence of character which had distinguished the abbot of La Trappe in the world, now characterised him equally in the cloister. The zeal of the founder was visible in every part of his discipline. The astonishing austerity of this reform at La Trappe may well make nature recoil. Yet, improbable as it may appear, scarcely was the reformation completed, before it became completely crowded with votaries. Nor have the numbers ever

\* Many of those who became most eminent for piety in this monastery, were originally persons of the most extraordinary profligacy and wickedness. The accounts of the lives of the Trappists are most of them interesting. It is curious to observe the steps by which so wonderful a change was effected; how men of like passions with ourselves could ever feel it either an inclination or a duty to enter upon a mode of life so alien to common ways of thinking or feeling. Some of these accounts contain passages truly edifying.



diminished, notwithstanding the perpetual violence it imposes on every human feeling.

The situation of the monastery is well adapted to M. de Rancé's views. It originally received the name of La Trappe, from the intricacy of the road which leads to it, and the great difficulty of discovering any access or egress.

This abbey is situated not far from Evreux and St. Maurice.

On descending a hill near the latter village, the traveller suddenly finds himself at the skirts of a dark forest, which extends further than the eye can reach, over an immense tract of country. Here it becomes necessary to take a guide, for the way is so exceedingly intricate, that even those best acquainted with it, are in perpetual danger of losing their road.

The whole of the way is inexpressibly dreary. It is only diversified by a few lone huts, or solitary dilapidated chapels. Here and there are seen, beneath the spreading trees, a few decaying crosses raised by pious hands. The squirrels, hares, and foxes, seemed undisturbed, to possess the whole domain.

After traversing these lone roads for some hours, the trees become thicker, and tangled with underwood, and the traveller reaches a thick wood, clothing the sudden slope of a hill. Here a most romantic prospect opens. Hills of every variety of



form present themselves to the eye on every side, and they are completely covered with forests, offering the most fanciful variety of tint and foliage.

On penetrating the midst of this thicket, a little path, or rather track, is pointed out by the guide, if indeed one may call by that name a way where no vestige of human footstep appears. A little blaze here and there, on particular trees, is the only direction. Even this is so faintly marked, that to others but the guide it would be nearly imperceptible. After pursuing this path for about three miles, through a maze of the most intricate turnings and windings, and through every diversity of rise and fall, the traveller again finds an opening in the trees. Here he discovers himself to be on the overhanging brow of a hill, the descent of which is clothed with wood, and so perpendicular as to appear impracticable, till led by the guide to a zig-zag path, concealed by the trees, and hollowed out of the side of the rock; it appears almost impossible to advance a step, without tumbling headlong into the valley beneath.

The prospect is truly awful and striking. On all sides nothing is visible but hills, rising one beyond another, and completely covered with dark forests. These extend in endless continuity, without the least apparent vestige of any human footstep having ever trod them before. An almost death-like silence and

stillness reigns all around. Directly under the feet, but at a great depth, is a long and steep valley, so narrow and so thickly wooded, as to be almost impervious to the rays of the sun.

This valley is interspersed with eleven lakes. The waters are completely stagnant; their hue is dark and dismal. These lakes connecting one with another, in two circles, form a double moat about the monastery. In the middle of the day the venerable abbey of La Trappe appears rising in the centre. In the morning and evening the exhalations arising from the waters are so thick, that only its dark grey towers, above the curling vapour, or the deep tone of its bell, announces to the traveller that he has reached his journey's end.

Perhaps there is not a situation in the whole world more calculated to inspire religious awe, than the first view of the monastery of La Trappe. The total solitude, the undisturbed silence, and the deep solemnity of the scene, are indescribable. The only adequate comparison of sensation I can make, is that excited by the sight of death.

In descending the steep, through difficult and intricate by-paths, the traveller again loses sight of the abbey, till he has actually reached the bottom of the hill. Then emerging from the trees, the following inscription, immediately before him, appears, in stone work, above the grate of the convent.

“ C'est ici que la mort et la vérité  
 Élèvent leurs flambeaux terribles;  
 C'est de cette demeure au monde inaccessible  
 Que l'on passe à l'éternité.”

The general scope of which might be thus rendered :—

“ Here truth, with death and silence reigns;  
 Their dread light shines within this grate:  
 Far from the world, no change remains  
 From hence until the eternal state.”\*

Such is the external appearance of La Trappe. It soon became the theatre of the most astonishing reform which has perhaps ever been witnessed. I think I said that M. de Rancé at first met with many difficulties from the monks, and that they made frequent attempts on his life. Four different times he was on the very point of being assassinated. The Lord, however, whom he served, preserved him, and delivered him out of the hands of his enemies. His power accompanied His servant; and at length he succeeded, even beyond his most sanguine expecta-

\* The abbey of La Trappe is immediately surrounded by a venerable grove of aged oak trees. Over the gateway is a statue of St. Bernard. He holds in one hand a cross, and in the other a spade, the emblems of devotion and labour. This door leads into a court which opens into a second enclosure, full of luxuriant fruit trees. Around it are granaries, a stable, a bakehouse, a mill, a brewhouse, and all other offices necessary to the monastery.

tions. So that the institution may now justly prove a wonder to all succeeding ages, though perhaps not to be viewed as a pattern, by those who have not received the same peculiar call. In considering the contradictions M. de Rancé at first met with, I often had brought to my mind that promise, that one who fears the Lord, shall, in His strength, overcome a thousand of his enemies.

The abstinence practised by the monks of La Trappe is truly wonderful. Neither meat, fish, eggs, or butter, are ever allowed, even in cases of extreme sickness. Vegetables, water, and bread, in very limited quantity, are what they mostly partake of. On grand festivals, a little hyssop, salt, and cheese, are added to the usual repast. They only eat twice a day. They have a slender meal at about ten in the morning, and a collation of two ounces of bread in the evening. Both meals together are not to exceed twelve ounces. The same quantity of water is likewise allowed.

The same spirit of mortification is observable in their cells. They are very small, and contain very little furniture. A bed, as hard as a board, one rug, a few good books, and a human skull, comprise the whole of their inventory.

The bare floor would be infinitely preferable to the knotted straw rope of which their bed is composed.

When any one who is ill, reaches the last extremity, he is placed on a bed made of dust and ashes on the brick floor, to expire.

An unbroken silence is maintained throughout the whole monastery, excepting during one hour on Sunday. Then a convocation of the brethren is held, and those who feel inclined, may make a short speech on religious subjects. No such thing however as conversation is ever allowed. With respect to any intercourse, each member is nearly as much insulated, as if he alone existed in the universe. If two of them are ever seen standing together, or pursuing their daily work near each other, even though they should observe the strictest silence, it is considered as a violation of the rule.

Perhaps some facts could scarcely be credited concerning them, which are however strictly and literally true. None but the abbot and prior know the name, age, rank, or even the native country of any of the different members of the community. Every one, at his first entrance, assumes a new name. With his former appellation, each is supposed not only to quit the world, but to abjure every recollection and memorial of his former self. No word ever drops from their lips which can possibly give the least clue, by which the others can guess who they are, or where they come from. Often have persons of the very same name, family, and neigh-

bourhood, lived together in the convent for years, unknown to each other; nor have they suspected their proximity, till at the death of the one, the name on the grave-stone revealed the secret to the survivor. Some years ago, a youth of great talents entered himself at La Trappe. His early and deep piety edified the whole society. After a few years the austerities he had practised at so early an age, undermined his health. He fell into a slow decline. One of the monks was appointed to attend him. He was selected as having himself left the world at a very early period. The youth died. About a year after his death, one of the monks happening to go rather earlier than usual into the burying-ground, their usual walking place, he saw the monk who attended the youth, standing with his arms folded, contemplating his tomb. On hearing him, he immediately fell back into the walk; no more notice was taken, the burying-ground continued the daily walking-place, nor did any other symptom ever escape. Ten years after, the monk died. His grave-stone unfolded the secret. It was his only son over whom he had mourned, and whom, though unknown to him, he had so diligently attended.

Though the monks of La Trappe do not associate together, their behaviour is marked with the most attentive politeness. When one of them, by any chance, meets another, he always uncovers himself,

and bows. At the hour of repast, they wait by turns at table. The servitors always bow as they present each person with anything. Yet as they keep their eyes fixed on the ground, unless necessarily obliged to raise them, they in fact scarcely know each other's faces.

Their attention to prevent noise is very great. If anything be by chance spilt at dinner, or thrown down, the person accidentally doing it, quits his seat, and prostrates himself on the ground, in the middle of the hall, till commanded by a signal from the abbot to rise.

The abstraction of mind practised at La Trappe is so great, that some of them have even forgotten the day of the week; and their thoughts are so exercised in holy meditations, that, like the *Therapeutæ* of old, they have been said often in their sleep to have broken out in the most beautiful prayers and thanksgivings.

One fact is certainly true, which is, that their abstraction from every worldly concern is so great, that none but the superiors know under what king's reign they are living.

The hardships undergone by the monks of La Trappe, appear almost insupportable to human nature.

They are allowed a very small fire in the common hall in winter. But no one is to go nearer it than



his business indispensably requires; much less are they permitted, on any account, to sit down for the purpose of warming themselves.

On grand festivals the brethren rise at midnight, otherwise they are not called till three quarters past one. At two they meet in the chapel, where they perform different services, public and private, till seven in the morning. At this hour they go out to labour in the open air. Their work is always of the most laborious and fatiguing kind. It is never intermitted winter or summer. Nor does their rule admit of any relaxation from the state of the weather.

Neither is any change of dress allowed them from the variation of the season. They are never permitted either to change or to take off their thick woollen clothes, by day or night, summer or winter.

Whether they be frozen by the winter's snow, or drenched by rain, or by the excessive perspiration, the monks are not permitted to take them off to dry them, till they are so completely worn out as to be laid aside.

Hence, probably, the numbers who die from rheumatic, and other painful complaints.

Persons on entering La Trappe, not only renounce their worldly possessions, but they write to take leave of all their connexions, and immediately break off all intercourse with their very nearest relations.

When a relative of any one of the community dies, information is never given to the individual most immediately interested. It is only mentioned publicly and in general terms thus: "A father, or sister, of one of our members is departed; the prayers of the whole community are requested."

The Abbé de Rancé turned out a novice, as not having the spirit of the order, because he observed him, in weeding, put by the nettles, to prevent being stung.

Their labour being over, they go into chapel for a short time, till half-past ten, which is the hour of repast. At a quarter after eleven they read till noon. They lie down and rest from twelve till one, which is the hour of nones. Half an hour after they are summoned into the garden, where they work till three.

They then read for three quarters of an hour, and retire for one quarter to their private meditations, by way of preparation for vespers, which begin at four, and end at five. They next sup, generally on bread and water, and afterwards retire to read in private, till half-past six. Then the public reading begins, and lasts till seven, the hour of complin. At eight they leave the chapel, and retire to rest.

The common hall where they assemble, both in their private and public readings, is hung with paintings of the most awful description.

The representation of a corpse; the same in a state of decomposition; and also as a skeleton; a soul in purgatory; and another writhing in the flames of hell, are amongst those which I particularly recollect.

At La Trappe they have continued a custom, which was very prevalent in the middle ages. That of placing little inscriptions, or moralities, as they used to be called, over the door of almost every room. That belonging to the eating hall, I thought peculiarly apposite: "*Melius est, ad olera, cum charitate vocari, quam ad vitulum saginatum, cum odio*" (Better is a dinner of herbs, where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith).

The establishment of such a reform, in opposition to the rooted purpose of every individual monk against it, is truly astonishing. Many of those who were most violently against it were completely won over. But it is still more surprising that notwithstanding the great austerities of La Trappe, perhaps there was never any rule more zealously upheld by its proselytes, or which has ever been more numerously resorted to.

Notwithstanding the immense number of deaths occasioned by these rigorous austerities, there are seldom less than two hundred, and even two hundred and fifty inmates in this monastery. They do not,

however, all belong to the regular clergy. The brethren may be classed under three different descriptions; the monks, properly speaking, who are all priests, and who wear a white woollen dress; the lay-brothers, who take the same vows, and follow the same rule, but who act as servants in transacting the temporal concerns of the abbey. They are distinguished by a grey gown and cowl. The third class are the frères donnés, or brothers given for a time. These last are not properly belonging to the order. They are rather religious persons, whose business or connexions prevent their joining the order absolutely. But who wishing to renew serious impressions, or to retire from the world for a season, come and stay for a given time, during which they are subject to all the rules, without wishing to join the order for life. Many persons on their first conversion, or after some peculiar dispensation of Providence, come and retire for six months, or a year, for the purposes of meditation; others only come for two or three months. The frères donnés form a considerable portion of the community at all times, though the individuals composing them continually fluctuate. They conform to all the rules, without adopting the monastic habit, only they dress in grave colours, with broad hats, and flaps to their coats.

The monks of La Trappe will not exhibit their

institution to those who wish to see it from curiosity. They are, however, truly courteous and hospitable to all who wish to visit them, from motives of piety. Nobody is allowed to stay as a mere guest longer than three days. During the limits of their visit the greatest kindness and respect is shewn them. Their visitors are treated with nearly the same fare as themselves; so that notwithstanding the kindness of the good fathers, a stranger unaccustomed to their rules, is nearly starved, before the expiration of his visit.

On the arrival of every stranger, the monk who receives him, prostrates himself at his feet, and makes a benedictory prayer. He is treated with the greatest respect, and two of the fathers are immediately appointed to attend him. They are always willing to give every information to strangers, if they are careful to ask in the proper places; but there are certain parts of the convent, where they are neither allowed to speak at all themselves, nor to suffer others to do it. Though they are very ready to answer questions in proper places, yet the rule of the order enjoins, that even to strangers they shall not voluntarily enter into conversation but for the use of edifying. I believe that very few, even amongst protestants, have visited La Trappe, without being deeply struck with the heavenly countenances of these recluses, and with the truly angelic discourse

which flows from their lips, as from a fountain of living water.

Perhaps the most astonishing part of M. de Rancé's reform is, not the mere introduction of a new rule, but the total change which is so soon visible in the manners; the inclinations, and the very countenances of his disciples. This, no doubt, proves that GOD was of a truth with him; for this is a change His Spirit alone could have wrought. Few enter La Trappe, who do not in a short time acquire a totally new countenance and demeanour.

It is impossible to describe the gravity, benignity, peace, and love, visible in most of their aspects; or the humility, and yet self-possessed politeness and attention in their manners. I remember when I was there, being most peculiarly struck with one of them. I think I never saw such venerable holy gravity, and yet celestial joy and love irradiate any human countenance. I could not take my eyes off a countenance the most angelic I ever beheld, or conceived. I concluded he had been twenty or thirty years an inmate of this seclusion. It so happened that he was next day appointed our conductor. I asked his age; what was my astonishment at the reply, "Six and twenty!" I inquired how long he had been an inhabitant of La Trappe. "As a monk two years." I then asked what he was before. "Do you then forget me?" said he, smiling. I cannot express the



surprise I felt at finding that this venerable saint, apparently fifty, was no other than a gay young captain in the French guards, whom I well remembered, five or six years before, to have been one of the most elegant and dissipated young men in Paris.

A visitor at La Trappe one day expressing some admiration at their self-denial; the brethren laying their hands on their hearts, with a look of deep humiliation, replied, "We bless GOD that we find Him all sufficient, without those things you speak of. As for our giving them up, we can claim no merit. Our deepest penances need to be repented of. We should have been here to little purpose, had we not learnt that our polluted righteousness, our insensible penitences, as our blackest sins, are altogether unholy and unclean. Through the precious blood of Christ; for His sake, and through His Spirit, we can alone find mercy, and acceptance, with GOD."

When the monks of La Trappe are asked why they chose this seclusion? their answer is uniform. "To glorify GOD, to repent of our sins, and to pray for the unhappy world, which prays not for itself."

M. de Rancé having been asked, why he alone enjoined so many austerities which no other religious order practises, is said to have replied to the following import: "I by no means consider them as practices to be adopted by all, yet I dare not aver they might be safely neglected by us. The grand peculi-



arities of the Gospel are essential to all collectively : yet no doubt, an attention to our own peculiar call, is equally essential to each individually. I can give the right hand of fellowship, or rather can sit at the feet of all those who have experimental knowledge of what Christ does for us by His atonement, and in us by His Spirit ; whether they be called to missions, with the Jesuits ; to acts of mercy, like the order of La Charité ; to enlighten the world, like the congregation of St. Maur ; to preach, like the Dominicans ; to humiliation, like the Minimi ; or to contemplation, like the order of La Visitation ; I can still honour the work of my Lord, in them all ; and recognise from my heart, that there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one GOD and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all. Nevertheless, I must also add with the apostle, there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are diversities of administration, but the same Lord ; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same GOD which worketh all in all. For assuredly, unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ ; yet, as we are all called to be living members of the Church of Christ ; which is joined and compacted by that which every joint supplieth ; no man can safely neglect his own peculiar call.

“The words which GOD employed to effect my conversion, were spoken to me by a very poor man. Yet ever since the change I experienced, I have believed it our calling in particular, to show the Christian world, that as every worldly gift without GOD is empty, so GOD, without any worldly good, is, as of old, all-sufficient.”

The piety and patience of the brethren of La Trappe are truly astonishing and admirable. One of them, owing to intense labour, had suffered from rheumatism, till a mortification on his back and shoulders had actually taken place. Although a wound had existed for two years, yet not a word of complaint had escaped his lips; nor did he by any gesture indicate the exquisite torture he endured from the rough woollen garment he wore next his skin. At length the blood oozing through betrayed him. A surgeon was sent for. On examination, the mortification had proceeded so far that it was impossible to save his life, but by actually cutting off the flesh to the very quick, so as to lay the bone entirely bare. The surgeon pronounced it to be one of the most painful operations possible. He desired the subject might be tied, as nothing else could enable him to endure it. The patient replied, with a look of deep humility and thankfulness, “Of myself I know I could not bear it, but GOD, I trust, will enable me.” The patient accordingly sat down and

the operation began. None of the assistants could refrain from tears. The holy man did not, however, once change countenance; the same peace and composure sat upon his features. The surgeon was perfectly astonished. He told M. de Rancé, who was by, that the torture which the patient underwent was so great, that the effort he made to refrain from groaning was sufficient to kill him on the spot, and that he must sink under it. M. de Rancé commanded him to give way to his feelings. The poor man raised his eyes with a look of exquisite suffering, but yet with a benignant, peaceful joy, and said, "Through the infinite mercy of GOD, my soul is kept in perfect peace. Never until now had I such a view of the goodness of GOD in the extremity of my Saviour's sufferings; He has favoured me with such an inexpressible sense of the depth of His love, that I find as much difficulty in refraining from tears of joy, and songs of thanksgiving, as I thought I should have found in refraining from groans;" then with a fervent voice, and clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, "O! the unsearchable depth of the riches of the love of GOD in Christ;" and immediately fell back and expired!

Nor was this spirit at all uncommon at La Trappe. I think you would find great pleasure and edification in reading "*Mémoires touchant la Vie et la Mort de plusieurs Religieux de la Trappe.*" It is a

deeply pious work, published by Dom Pierre le Nain, sub-prior of La Trappe; in which he gives an account of the lives and blessed ends of many of these truly excellent men. He has published an account of M. de Rancé, which many prefer to M. de Meaupeaux, and to M. Villefores. I suppose you know that Dom Pierre le Nain is brother to our friend the celebrated M. Tillemont. Both were in the school of Chenet. How truly thankful and joyful should we be in the midst of our persecution, that it has pleased GOD, so to bless our endeavours, and to make our little school the means of producing such excellent and valuable men.

M. de Rancé does not encourage learning in his monastery. Some persons think he discourages it too much; perhaps it arose from having so long experienced the effects of unsanctified learning himself, and probably this led him not sufficiently to appreciate the value of that which was sanctified. His controversy on the subject with the amiable and learned Mabillon is well known. The congregation of St. Maur was at this time at the height of its celebrity for its deep erudition. Distinguished by the labours of Menard, D'Acherri, Mabillon, Ruinart, Germain, Montfaucon, Martin, Vaisette, le Nourri, Martianay, Martenne, and Massuet: its splendid and learned editions of the fathers of the Christian Church, had already spread its fame over

the Christian world. They were at this very period engaged in some of their most laborious and valuable works. These pious and learned Benedictines felt themselves therefore called upon in a peculiar manner to reply to Rancé's work. They selected Father Mabillon as the fittest member of their body to defend their cause. The controversy continued for some time. Perhaps M. de Rancé's replies show that even the very best of men too often find it difficult to distinguish their individual experience from that universal observation on which alone general rules can be justly founded.

Blessed be GOD, He has shown us, by the examples of both these excellent societies, that with Him it is neither learned nor unlearned, Greek nor barbarian, which avails anything, but a new creature, a heart renewed after His image in righteousness and true holiness; even His grace through a crucified Redeemer, apprehended by faith, and working by love.

Whilst the holy but unlettered fathers of La Trappe exemplified to the world that GOD is all-sufficient, and that the way of holiness is so plain, that even a fool need not err therein: the equally pious, but more learned congregation of St. Maur, show forth in all the earth, that with every advantage of talent and science, it is yet possible, by the grace of GOD, so to learn Christ, as with St.

Paul, to "count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of GOD in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I believe I ought to apologise to you, my reverend mother, for this long digression concerning M. de Rancé; but the institution is so unparalleled, and has lately excited so much attention, that I thought you might be interested in knowing the steps which led to its establishment.

M. de Rancé is not the only disciple of M. d'Alet. Many other persons equally eminent, though not so singular, also owe their spiritual birth to him; especially the learned antiquarian Montfaucon, of St. Maur.

## PART III.

*Continuation of Lancelot's Letter to la Mère Angélique de St. Jean, Abbess of Port Royal.*

I CONFESS, however, that I was still more struck with the more than paternal care M. d'Alet takes of his flock, than even with the luminous pastoral instructions he has addressed to celebrated and eminent men. The latter might have been attributed to a desire of having disciples, who might establish his reputation, did not the former show, that his chief care is bestowed on those whom GOD has placed under his special and immediate charge. He very often says — “Souls, my brethren, are of equal value. O that we were but deeply persuaded of it! A poet in a neighbouring island has said, that the beetle which is crushed unheeded, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies. Though this is more poetic than philosophic as it respects the body, how true is it in the second death, in the death of the soul. There the wretch who expires on a dung-hill, or the prince who departed from the silken couch.



alike feel the relentless gnawing of the worm that dieth not! and writhe in equal torture on the bed of flames that will never be quenched! An equal hell awaits sinners of every rank; an equal heaven invites every seeker; an equal Saviour died for every individual soul. O! let us go to Calvary and Golgotha, to learn how very precious is the very least and meanest in the sight of Christ our Saviour. Let us go daily to Gethsemane, and to the sepulchre, to learn how we ought to love and bear on our hearts every soul of man."

I was astonished to find it a literal fact, that M. d'Alet knows both the temporal and spiritual wants of every single individual throughout the whole of his extensive diocese. This is actually the case respecting even children above ten years old; and I am told, there is not one, the meanest shepherd's boy, whose situation he does not thoroughly inquire into once every year. If any lads appear to have good parts, he places them in good seminaries, which he has established in every town. He keeps a peculiar watchful eye over any that appear seriously disposed, and if they show talents, he places them in the ministry. He often watches over them for years; nor does he ever regard expense in their education, when they seem likely to prove a real blessing in the Church. Perhaps it cannot be said, with truth, of many other bishops besides M. d'Alet,

that he never ordained any individual who was not a decidedly religious character. He often says, that he considers that bishops can have no right to ordain, but where they see those fruits which prove the Spirit of GOD to have first called.

Nothing can exceed the pastoral care which M. d'Alet bestows on those young men who are candidates for the ministry. He requires of them, above all, a deep and assiduous study of Scripture. He is not fond of encouraging young divines in philosophical speculations and controversial discussions. M. d'Alet often says, that he wishes them, not merely to be well versed in the letter of Holy Writ; but to have a knowledge of Scripture, by the science of the heart; for it is with the heart only, that man can believe unto righteousness. "It is not," he observes, "in order to obtain a reputation for learning, nor yet from the mere pleasure of acquiring knowledge, that we should study; but simply, and practically, in order to learn the science of salvation, and to be enabled really to serve our brethren. Study and prayer must be conducted in one and the same spirit; and they should be constantly and inseparably united. Both require an extreme simplicity of intention, and a humility which may content itself with that degree of knowledge it may please GOD to bestow; a spirit of godly contentment and thankfulness; not stimulated by the desire of

surpassing others, and not feeling discontent at inferiority to them. Being fully persuaded that we shall partake in their reward, if by charity we participate in the same desire of doing good which inspired them."

"How many persons," says M. d'Alet, "allow themselves to be deceived in the choice of their studies by specious illusions. Satisfied that their main object is good, they rush forward with confidence and with ardour, without perceiving any danger; and it happens too often, for want of assiduous prayer, that the very knowledge which should establish them in piety, only inflates them with pride, and stimulates them with self-love."

We should read comparatively little; but meditate much, and pray much. That is the way, and the only way, to become solidly grounded. Rapid studies only glide over the surface of the mind; and often increase ignorance, by the confused traces they leave. Only that which is deeply engraven upon the heart and mind, can ever be ready for immediate use.

M. d'Alet's information respecting the female part of his flock is equally extensive and correct.

This accurate investigation is accomplished by means of numerous societies, which he has instituted, and to which he has given the name of Regents or teachers.

One of the female societies of this description I shall give you an account of. I was introduced to the superior by M. d'Alet, and I understand that all the others, both male and female, are formed on a similar plan.

In the one which I saw, all the ladies were of high birth and fortune; indeed, it is necessary they should be persons of some independence, because the society is not endowed, and has no funds appropriated to its use, like a convent. For though all live in one house, and are boarded at a common table, yet the expense is furnished by each one separately paying her quota. Hence, though it so happened that all those I saw were noble, yet persons of every rank are equally accepted, though a competency is indispensable. Some of them, however, are of a very elevated rank. Amongst them is Madame de Pamiers, widow of the Baron de Mirepoix, of the house of Levi, of which the noble family of Ventadour is but the younger branch.

Good health, good sense, independent circumstances, conciliating manners, and deep piety, are essentially requisite to gain admittance into the society of Regents.

These ladies take no vows, yet they live much in the same manner as religious orders; they only maintain the laws of enclosure in their own house. There, as in nunneries, no men ever enter without

an absolute necessity. They do not wear a monastic dress; yet they are all clothed exactly alike. They wear dark stuffs which reach up close to the throat; with long sleeves down to the wrists; their handkerchiefs also come close up to the throat; and their caps, which are very neat, cover the whole of their hair, excepting a little on the forehead, so that they are directly known in the street, whether they go out to visit the sick or to attend the services of the Church. Whenever they appear, either singly or together, they are always treated with the greatest respect. All the passengers stand aside to let them pass; and when they go to Church, the crowd instantly divides to let them take the best seats.

The object of this society is peculiarly that of instructing and relieving their own sex; it unites the offices of nursing the sick, instructing the ignorant, and giving spiritual help to the distressed. Two of its most important aims are, teaching domestic management to poor families, and forming schools for girls. To accomplish these ends, each society of Regents has a large house at Alet, which may be termed its head-quarters. Here the superior and prioress always reside, and are immediately under the bishop's inspection. They have with them an assistant committee, chosen half-yearly out of the whole society. Here all instructions are given by the bishop, and all orders are issued to the rest of

the body ; all information is received from them, and all their wants are supplied by the superior and committee. In this house is a very good library ; it is composed of every work of piety and valuable information which can possibly be useful either to give or lend to any of their own sex, from the cottage to the palace.

They have also an extensive apothecary's shop and surgery. All the Regents receive regular instruction in dressing wounds, nursing, and in mixing and dispensing medicines, from the first professional men in the place. The upper story of the house consists of one large magazine, stored with flannel clothing, blankets, sheets, and everything which the poor and sick can want.

They have also a very neat little chapel ; it is only furnished with plain wooden benches and straw hassocks. They have a remarkably sweet-toned organ, with many harps and lutes. Most of the ladies have not only sweet voices, but are perfect mistresses of music. By this means the playing and singing is such, that even the first connoisseurs might receive delight from the superior excellency of their performance.

The Regents have not separate cells, like nuns, but one exceedingly large dormitory. Down each side are deep recesses, wide enough to contain a small bed, a book-shelf, a chair, and a table. In each



recess is a window. At the entrance to every one is a thick woollen cloth curtain, which, being let down, leaves the individual in private; and deadens the sound which would otherwise be perceptible from so many people.

The superior is a woman of fine understanding, great strength of mind, and great activity. She is highly respected by the whole society; indeed, the love, unity, and perfect intelligence, which reign amongst all the members of this little community are truly admirable.

The establishment I have now described is at Alet, where I must observe all the Regents spend about six months in every year. The whole community reside together from the week before Passion Week till the middle of September. This season they devote to prayer, studying the Scriptures, working to supply the stock of poor's clothes; nursing and instructing the people, and attending on the lectures given by M. de Alet; in short, their chief object in the summer months is to instruct themselves, and to prepare against winter.

Early in the autumn the good bishop selects a large detachment of them, and appoints the district where they are to labour till the next Easter. Accordingly, in September they set out for the country, where they spend the winter; this being, though the least convenient to them, the most favourable season



for instructing the poor. In summer the poor are obliged to labour in the fields so assiduously that they have but little time for learning. In winter the case is different. Their wants urge them to implore the assistance of the rich, and their increased leisure affords more opportunity of profiting by their instructions.

As soon as the ladies reach the district appointed for the year, six of them go to the principal town, and take possession of a house provided on purpose for them by the bishop; the rest of the detachment proceed by two and two to houses appointed for them, in like manner, in all the villages immediately circumjacent.

In these houses the ladies remain the whole time. No man ever enters, nor do they ever go out but to chapel, and as it falls to the turn of each to visit the sick in the town. A medicine closet, and clothes for the poor, are immediately provided, and they are themselves supplied with every requisite from Alet.

As soon as they arrive at any town, they deliver a letter of recommendation to the principal clergyman in the place; and also an order from the bishop, that he should give the whole town notice of their arrival. Accordingly a printed paper is put up in the market place, and in the corners of the streets, with an invitation to all females, of every age and denomination, to wait on them.

In a hall appropriated for the purpose, they receive all the women and children who choose to come, and immediately begin a regular and settled plan of instruction, which fully occupies them from morning till night.

The morning instruction is generally of a temporal, and the evening of a spiritual character. One day in the week is devoted to teach the young women to cut out clothes to advantage, cheap cookery, and many things of the like nature. Every other day a school is held for the girls. They are instructed in reading, writing, working, and accounts. Part of every day is devoted to religious reading and catechetical instruction. It is expected that no book shall be read, nor any catechism used, which has not been prescribed by the bishop. The ladies are, however, expected to use their own discretion in commenting, and applying their instructions to existing circumstances.

At these meetings all of their own sex are invited to be present; there are, however, other meetings, which are more particularly designed for those who have made farther advances; or who have manifested a disposition decidedly serious. In these they have readings of a more spiritual nature, to which they add exhortation, and a little free spiritual conversation, in which each person, who is inclined, relates her experience, or asks advice. Besides this, the

Regents have, once a fortnight, private conversation with every individual who attends them. So that there is not a single person with whose state of mind they are unacquainted.

Once a month they all assemble from the neighbouring villages in their house in town. Here they give an account of their mutual labours, state their difficulties, encourage each other, arrange their plans for the ensuing month, and draw up a statement of their progress, and a catalogue of their wants, which is sent to the superior and committee at Alet; and is by them transmitted to the bishop. In this account every individual is mentioned, and it is by this means M. d'Alet acquires so extensive an acquaintance with his diocese.

After the Regents have been two or three months in a place, and are well acquainted with the people, they make choice of some of the most pious and intelligent, whom they take into their house, and to whom they give instructions, to qualify them to conduct everything on the same plan, after their departure. They also select some of the most pious ladies to take the superintendance of the whole. Thus little schools and religious societies are formed all over the diocese. They also instruct in mixing medicines, attending the sick, &c. By this regular system, stability has been given to their institution. Wherever they have once obtained footing, not only

a total, but a permanent reform, has mostly succeeded their labours.

It is astonishing how much the Regents are beloved and respected. If they are seen in the streets, each one in passing is sure to pull off his hat, and stand aside. Not seldom have I seen the roughest boors bless them with tears in their eyes. Even the little children are delighted with their winning, affectionate, and cheerful manners.

“*We* had the Regents last year!” is a sentence often pronounced with great exultation in the diocese of Alet. I have often seen the words,—“The Regents are come!” diffuse the same joy over a whole village, as though it had been a public festival.

The labours of these ladies are by no means solely confined to the poor; those amongst the rich and noble, who want their advice, are perfectly at liberty to ask it, whilst they reside in their district.

It has nevertheless been found necessary to make strict, or rather inviolable rules. Otherwise the accumulating multiplicity of acquaintance would subject them to a degree of intrusion, which would effectually defeat the object of their labours.

The established rules are therefore never departed from. Whilst the Regents wholly devote themselves to their own district, and receive every one there who comes to them; they, at the same time, never allow, on any pretext whatever, of any corre-

spondence, either by letter or visits, with persons whose quarter they have left.

Should any letter be sent, a short, but polite answer from the superior states their rule and the reason for it; and the writer is referred to the established superintendent of the district. Nor is any intercourse resumed, till in the course of their rounds they again return to the same place.

With the superintendents and the ladies' committees they keep a constant communication. The bishop also takes care that they shall be regularly inspected by the minister of the place.

On the Regents' return to Alet in spring, they render an account of all they have done; they are peculiarly careful to mark all the errors and mistakes they have fallen into, and appoint solemn seasons of retirement, fasting, and prayer, to receive the divine forgiveness.

It is astonishing how great a blessing has accompanied the works of these truly devoted women. Their footsteps throughout the diocese may be almost traced by the reformation visible. Perhaps few since the days of the apostles, have better fulfilled the object they had in view, namely, a conformity, through a loving faith, to both the active and contemplative life of Christ.

A gentleman on a visit at Alet, being much surprised at the great reform he witnessed, said one

day to the superior,—“All your sisters must be persons of very extraordinary talents.” “God forbid we should think so,” replied she; “or that we should suffer you to remain in such a delusion. We do not generally find those of the greatest talents the most useful. Those sisters amongst us have been most eminently blessed, who have had the deepest experimental knowledge of their own unworthiness, and of Christ’s fulness; we find that Christ is our all in all, and that we are nothing. All depends on looking to Him continually with a lively, loving faith. My sisters are so destitute of every good thing, that they are moment by moment compelled to go to Him, and to draw out of His fulness. From Him who spake as never man spake, do we seek a mouth and utterance; from Him who is a Wonderful Counsellor, and who is made unto us wisdom, do we ask spiritual wisdom. On Him that is strong, do we wait to renew our strength; and from the Lamb, without blemish, and without spot, who bore our iniquities, and who was slain for us, from Him alone, do we seek true love and patience. He only is our strength; nor is He only so, but also our Redeemer. Whilst we desire every moment to rely on His strength, we also feel every moment the necessity of fresh forgiveness through His precious blood.”

A gentleman at M. d’Alet’s, who was much pleased with their union of activity and recollection,

used often to smile, and call them, "Sisters of the order of Martha and Mary." One of them replied, "We do indeed desire to serve our Lord with cheerful Martha's busy hands, and to sit at his feet with Mary's loving heart: yet as our Lord Himself was the source of both Martha's industry and Mary's humiliation, if you will call us anything, we had rather it were "Sisters of the order of the love of Christ."

The Bishop of Alet has formed very similar institutions amongst the men; nevertheless, as he must himself be accountable for his charge, he does not blindly trust the report of *any* persons, however excellent.

He has divided his diocese into ten districts. Though now upwards of seventy, he always resides one month in the year in each. So that he is every three months at Alet, and nine months in making the tour of his diocese. During these pastoral visits, his labour is almost incredible. He sees and speaks to every single individual himself. He also lays down a plan of instruction for the ecclesiastic of the place till next year.

The difficulties through which M. d'Alet is carried in these visits, are fresh proofs of the unspeakable love of our Saviour; of His pity to the poor of His flock, and of His faithfulness to those who put their trust in Him, and who have been sent forth by His Spirit to preach His dying love and quickening power to poor ignorant sinners.



The diocese of M. d'Alet is situated near the foot of the Pyrenees. Whoever has seen the dreadful passes in these mountains, will be immediately convinced that grace and not nature could alone induce an aged man, of above seventy, to tempt them every month. Some of the places have no road, but a path scooped out of the rock; in others the footing is washed away by torrents, and only a few loose stones remain. Over these tremendous passes the litter of M. d'Alet is constantly seen to traverse. Frequently the road is too narrow for its width, and is seen overhanging precipices half a quarter of a mile in perpendicular depth; over which one false step of either mule must infallibly precipitate him.

On such occasions it is delightful to see the people's love for their aged pastor; the young shepherds beneath falling on their knees in prayer for his preservation, whilst the hoary headed ones, whose faith is stronger, seem to chide their doubts, exclaiming "God is with him! his footsteps *shall not slide.*"

M. d'Alet frequently invites to his house promising young men of less decided character, in hopes of gaining them over. His cheerful and pious conversation has often been the means of their conversion. How far that may ever be the case with our friend the Abbé Gagliagni, who is at present here, I will not venture to say. He was always rather inclined to be self-opinionated, and fond of novelties in re-

ligion, from the unhappy effects of unsanctified learning; but lately the young man's head seems completely turned by the good success of one of his sallies, which I could wish his Holiness had rather repressed than encouraged. You know Gagliagni's learning, and especially his mineralogical talents. His Holiness, who is a great patron of science, gave him a commission to examine the fossil productions of Vesuvius, and send him specimens. Gagliagni, who delights in these researches, but who would have been too poor to have undertaken the tour for his own amusement, was glad enough of the commission. He soon formed a very beautiful and rare collection; and arranging it in the most elegant and scientific order, he sent it to the Pope with a note. The prelate, on opening the seal, only found this line,—“*Dic ut lapides isti panes fiant,*” (“Command that these stones be made bread.”) The Pope, who is a great lover of wit, notwithstanding his piety, immediately enclosed an order for a very considerable pension in return, with a note, which in allusion to Gagliagni's suspected heresy, is as follows: “The Pope is rejoiced that the Abbé Gagliagni seems at length convinced that to the successors of St. Peter belongs the exclusive prerogative of seizing the true spirit of Scripture. His Holiness never gave any explanation with greater pleasure, since he is fully convinced that the interpretation herewith

sent will perfectly satisfy the Abbé Gagliagni's remaining doubts as to his infallibility."

M. d'Alet looked rather grave when he heard this anecdote, and said,—“I could be well satisfied if we had a pontiff of less wit, and more reverence for GOD'S revealed word.”

Notwithstanding M. d'Alet's extreme age, he is equally remarkable for his attentive politeness, and his amiable temper.

There are several hamlets belonging to the village of Alet, which are both remote and difficult of access. A poor woman who was exceedingly ill, desired her husband to go to the curate, and request him to come and administer the sacrament immediately. It was very late in the evening, and quite dark. As the roads were besides covered with snow, and exceedingly dangerous, the curate did not like to go at such an hour. “My good friend,” said he, “perhaps your wife may not be so ill as you imagine. You see the weather; besides, at this late hour, consider the imminent danger of falling over the precipices. I will wait on your wife early to-morrow, but it is out of the question to-night.”

The poor man, almost in despair, ran to the episcopal palace, and stated his case. M. d'Alet was gone to bed. He, however, immediately rose. On looking out of the window, and seeing that the weather was really bad, he ordered the

torches to be lighted, and prepared to go himself. The grand vicar, astonished, asked if he had not better order the curate to go, and do what was in fact his duty. "No," said the bishop, "not for this once; a bishop, a Christian overseer at the head of his flock, like Cæsar at the head of his legions, should, if he mean to succeed, oftener say *venite* (come) than *ite* (go)."

The bishop possesses a very happy way of explaining himself in a few words.

A person who had long practised many austerities, without finding any comfort or change of heart, was once complaining to the bishop, "Alas!" said he, "self-will and self-righteousness follow me everywhere; only tell me when you think I shall learn to leave self. Will it be in discipline, in study, in prayer, or in good works?" "I think," replied the prelate, "that the place where you will lose self, will be that where you find your Saviour." Another person pleading in behalf of uniting worldly acquaintance with religious profession, said, "Believers are called to be the salt of the earth." "Yes," said M. d'Alet, "*and yet if salt be cast into the ocean from which it was originally drawn, it will melt away and vanish entirely.*"

A person once excusing his non-attendance at public worship, by pleading the disagreeable appearance and manner of the minister, "Let us look more at our Saviour, and less at His instruments,"

said M. d'Alet: "Elijah was as well nourished, when the bread from heaven was brought by a raven, as Ishmael, when the spring of water was revealed to him by an angel. Whether then we are fed immediately from GOD, as the Israelites with manna in the wilderness, or by the instrumentality of those who may seem to us as angels, or by those who may seem to us contemptible, let us be content and thankful, if they are but appointed of GOD, and if it be the bread and water of life which they bring."

M. d'Alet's own manners are uncommonly sweet and prepossessing, and he strongly recommends Christian politeness to others; as a constant exercise of love, patience, humility, and self-denial. I believe he looks as constantly to Christ in little things, as in great. Nevertheless, nobody bears with greater kindness the entire want of these things in others; or is more united in heart to them when they are united to Christ. "My dear friends," says he to his flock, "never forget it is your glorious privilege to be a chosen generation; a holy nation; a peculiar people; and a royal priesthood. Let us then resemble the high priest, who when he was anointed with that sacred unction, let the oil run down to the very skirts and fringes of his garment, that even the smallest parts might shed the fragrant perfume of the sanctuary. Nevertheless, do not cultivate a fas-

tidious delicacy towards others, in making requisitions you find it so hard to comply with yourselves. Be content, if, by a living faith, they cleave in sincerity to Christ our Saviour; even if their manners are rough and unpolished. Remember, though their hands be those of Esau, you will find their voices and their hearts are those of Jacob."

I think I have never been so fully convinced, as since my visit here, that Christ does, indeed, enable his disciples to become the salt of the earth, and to season whatsoever they come near.

All M. d'Alet's household appear to partake in different degrees of the same spirit. The ecclesiastics who reside with him are all men of genuine piety. Some of them possess deep learning. These chiefly assist the bishop, in drawing up instructions for his diocese. Others are men of equal excellence, but whose talents rather fit them for the executive part of the business.

Even the very servants breathe the same spirit. They might all be taken by their appearance, to be members of some religious community. Their recollection, silence, humility, obedience, and exactness, is truly edifying. The porter is esteemed a real saint. I have often conversed with him with much profit. It is astonishing how much a fervent faith, not only inspires good affections in the heart, but likewise enlightens and strengthens the natural



judgment. It seems impossible to receive the centre of all truths without, in some measure, participating in the rays which emanate therefrom. All the servants perform their duties with wonderful attention.

It is striking to see the contrast between the hair-cloth and penitential shirt which some of them wear, and the spirit of prayer and praise in which they live.

Such is the house of the Bishop of Alet. Such is that excellent man, whom the great of this world have treated as the very offscouring of the earth, and that because he refused to sign an iniquitous formulary of persecution. A formulary which denounces banishment, imprisonment, and death, against the true servants of our Lord Jesus Christ. A formulary, which, whilst it has been the means of bestowing the crown of martyrdom on some, has been a stumbling block to thousands.

M. d'Alet, M. de Pamiers d'Angers, and de Beauvais, and your honoured house at Port Royal, alike suffer in one common cause, the pretended imputation of Jansenism.

Well may you rejoice at being favoured to suffer in the Lord's cause, and that, in company with the most excellent of the earth. For such assuredly are these great men.

The Bishop of Bellay paid a visit to M. d'Alet some years ago. I felt great curiosity to hear of a man, so long esteemed the luminary of France for



erudition, and the example of France for piety.\* Above all, I longed to know something of a man, who for so many years, was the intimate friend of St. Francis de Sales. This excellent prelate was never received into favour, after his disgrace by Cardinal Richelieu, above twenty-seven years ago, for refusing to conceal the disorderly conduct of the religious orders. This ambitious and unprincipled minister felt it an object to retain his influence over them. Threats and promises were lavished in vain, to induce the bishop to withdraw his accusations. M. de Bellay steadily refused. "Sir," said Richelieu, "had you not refused me this, I could have canonised you." "Would to GOD you had," replied the pious, but acute prelate; "we should then each be possessing our supreme desire! You would be encircling your brows with the papal tiara on earth; and I should be casting a crown of immortal amaranth at the feet of my adorable Saviour in heaven!"

M. d'Alet was mentioning an anecdote, which at once

\* The Bishop of Bellay was both a saint and a wit. A pattern of a holy and a self-denying life himself, he severely chastised the abuses prevalent among some of the religious. He was once called upon to preach a sermon, in order to raise a subscription for the portion required of a young lady by a rich convent, into which she was about to enter. He accordingly preached a most eloquent discourse, which he concluded in the following words:—"In short, my beloved brethren, be liberal; and bestow on this young lady that wealth, which in modern times is requisite to take the vow of poverty." — *Dictionnaire Historique, edit. 1804, à son article.*

proves the influence of the Jesuits, and the inveteracy of the court prejudices against us. He had it from the Duke of Orleans. Some time ago a gentleman was proposed to the king as a proper travelling companion to the dauphin. The king (Louis XIV.) mistaking him for another person of the same name, objected to him as being a Jansenist. "Sire," said his informant, "he is so far from holding grace and election, that he doubts if there be even a GOD." "O," returned the king, "that is another affair; I really thought he had been a Jansenist; I have not the least objection!"

The Duke of Orleans was almost convulsed with laughter as he related this specimen of the king's zeal for orthodoxy. To us, may this additional proof of the blindness of the human heart be a fresh call, diligently to examine our own. How possible is it, to hold the strongest sectarian prejudices, and yet be wholly destitute of all vital godliness, and of all respect for the very first principles of divine truth.

.May we continually pray for an understanding heart; a heart renewed in divine knowledge by the Spirit of GOD; that we may discern between the polar truths of the Gospel, and the doubtful inductions of unassisted human reason upon them!

Such, my dear, and very reverend Mother, is the short narrative of my little tour. May it beguile some of the dreary hours of your tedious captivity.

M. de Brienne, who will deliver my packet to you, will give you an account of our proceedings. Well, the Lord is still with us! Though some of us are in exile, and some in prisons; though you are surrounded by an armed guard, and we wander over the face of the earth without house or home, we all know in whom we have believed! In our prosperity we believed in Him as our Redeemer, in adversity we experience Him indeed to be our strength. Though separated far from each other, He, our Lord, is present to every one. May we all renewedly look to that blessed GOD and Saviour, who is above all, and over all, and in us all; and by whom alone we spiritually live, and move, and have our being!

Blessed be GOD! He has given faith and love to all his suffering children, to bear each other on their hearts; and He has promised that where two agree on earth, touching anything, it shall be done for His sake in heaven. Let us then pray in faith, that all His holy will be wrought in us; that waiting on Him we may daily renew our strength, and, experiencing His faithfulness, we may be more deeply rooted and grounded in the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. My venerable mother, and dear sisters! be not faithless but believing. The Lord increase in us that faith which is the *subsistence* of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.

Though armed men guard your walls, and keep you in on every side, yet the Lord is with you; and GOD, even our GOD, dwells within the temple of your hearts. Cut off from the world, which hates us, let us rejoice, that we can more constantly commune with that Saviour, who loves us, and gave Himself for us. Interdicted the sacrament by an arbitrary decree, rejoice, that whilst deprived of the external sign, the invisible grace is still yours; and you can still feed, by faith, in your hearts, on the true bread from heaven, and on the true wine of the kingdom. If no outward ministry be allowed you; if your oppressors abolish every outward ceremony in which ye seek Christ in the desert, or in the secret chamber, still I trust you will know by experience, that the kingdom of GOD is within you; even righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Be not discouraged that your chapel is levelled with the ground, your gardens torn up, and that serpents infest your retreats. GOD is a spirit, and His true worship is in spirit and in truth. If your ministers be dispersed over the face of the earth, and the anthem of praise be heard at Port Royal no more, submit it all to Christ our Saviour. To the priests of Baal, and not of Christ, are repetitions of words indispensably necessary. Christ dwells in the heart of true believers, in silent faith, speaking by active love.

Whilst the pastors who have been accustomed to distribute to you the bread of life, are far off, remember that legions of angels who minister to those who are heirs of salvation, wait unseen upon you. But above all, Jesus, the Great Angel of the Covenant, is ever with you. Ever does His precious blood plead in your behalf, at the throne of God; and ever is His blessed Spirit with you, to guide you into all truth. Especially, will He guide us into that fundamental one; a deep sense of our own utter vileness, emptiness, and nothingness. Then only can we know His *all-sufficient* fulness. No doubt the day is hastening, which shall make these polar truths fully manifest. Whilst we pray for our unhappy persecutors, may our *own* theme of rejoicing ever be; not that we have already attained, *but that we live in the day of atonement*. That the Lord has in infinite mercy revealed Himself to us as the Lord, long-suffering and gracious, full of mercy and loving-kindness, and whose mercy endureth for ever.

ON THIS FREE GRACE, ON THIS BOUNDLESS MERCY, ON THIS PRECIOUS BLOOD, AS THE ONLY PLEA OR HOPE OF SIN-POLLUTED SOULS, I CAST MYSELF, YOU, AND ALL OUR FRIENDS IN CHRIST. Nay, I would that the whole world, and even our enemies, should draw near and partake with us.

And now my dear and honoured mother and sisters, farewell! If the heat of persecution should still con-

tinue, and if (according to the flesh) we should see each other's face no more ; still am I well persuaded that none of the dispersed members of our Jerusalem can ever forget each other before GOD. The same Lord who heard Jonah's cry from the depths of hell, will listen to the prayers of His servants from the dungeons in which they are immured. Nor shall we suffer in vain. Our trust is in the Lord, and our chastening shall bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and make us happy partakers of His holiness. Though our living stones are now so dispersed, and though so severe the blows by which they are fashioned, yet let us not grieve. Soon shall they be taken from the desert of this world, and transplanted to the heavenly Jerusalem. Then shall they grow into an holy temple to the Lord, and He shall dwell in the midst of them for ever and ever.

Again, farewell ! and now I commend you to GOD, and His blessed keeping.

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you : the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

Your assured friend and disciple  
 in the close, indissoluble, and  
 eternal bonds of Christian love,

CLAUDE LANCELOT.

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 1667.

GIFT FROM AN ABBESS TO HER NUNS

OR SPECIMEN OF

LA RELIGIEUSE PARFAITE ET IMPARFAITE

OF

LA MÈRE AGNÈS DE ST. PAUL ARNAULD

ABBESS OF PORT ROYAL.





## PREFACE.

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HAVING often been called upon for a reprint of the following pages, which appeared in the *Winter's Wreath* of 1828, under the title of "Gift from an Abbess to her Nuns," I thought this work might not be unsuitably closed by a little specimen mostly selected from the celebrated work of the venerable Mère Agnès Arnauld; of whom so much honourable mention has been made, as sister to la Mère Angélique, the Reformer of Port Royal.

It is however necessary to premise, that the following essays were not written in their present form for the press. They form a small portion of a volume, originally intended solely for my own benefit; and selected with that view, with various degrees of precision, from *LA RELIGIEUSE PARFAITE ET IMPARFAITE* of the Mère Agnès. That having been my object, full freedom is used in leaving out whatever seemed *only* suitable to a monastic institute; whilst on the other hand, other passages are paraphrased, or occasionally expanded, that appeared more especially

applicable to a daily Christian walk or conversation. Many of the additions are however interwoven from other treatises, by the same venerable author.

The protestant reader who peruses the work of la Mère Agnès for his own benefit, will probably substitute the terms, *single-minded* or *double-minded religious professor*, for those of *perfect and imperfect, religious*; *religious profession* for *monastic vows*; *her own religious society* or *persuasion*, for *her own religious order*, or *religious house*, &c.

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The grace of conversion is differently manifested in three different classes of character. In the case of those represented by the stony ground, the seed is good and the blade is good. There is a real change, but not of an abiding character, because there is no depth of earth. There will always be less or more of such conversions wherever the gospel is faithfully preached. In the second class, there is not this want of depth of earth, neither is the change of a transitory nature; the blade does not wither away, but the plant is so choked by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, *that it brings no fruit to perfection*. In the following very valuable little treatise the imperfect religious may be considered as representing the thorny ground professor, while the per-

fect religious may be regarded as the good ground conversion, or the Christian of an honest and good heart, who like Joshua and Caleb follow the Lord fully, and bring forth fruit some sixty, some an hundred to His glory. This definition, of course, is not in accordance with the teaching of the treatise, but it is offered, to render the treatise more effectually useful. —ED.



## GIFT FROM AN ABBESS TO HER NUNS.

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No. I.

### INTRODUCTION.

CHRISTIAN perfection, and the perfection of a religious life, are essentially one and the same thing.

Yet, although there be but one Gospel proposed to every Christian, a certain degree of preference must be given to the call of a religious, who truly lives according to the grace of her vocation; above that of a secular, who lives in a Christian manner in the world.

The member of a religious society, is not only delivered from a variety of external hindrances, but she is favoured likewise with many peculiar helps and opportunities, favourable to a growth in grace; whereas a secular, though equally devoted to GOD as to the final object and centre of her affections, is yet sent forth not only to labour for His cause in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, but to

take a part in a variety of secular concerns, whose foundation may not always stand in the spirit of divine truth, and the very occupation in which, has a natural tendency to alienate the heart, and dissipate the mind.

A Christian secular should love GOD paramountly ; a Christian religious has the favour to be dedicated to GOD only.

In a Christian secular, divine love is the supreme ; but in a Christian religious, it is the sole affection.

My sister, if GOD has indeed called thee in an especial manner to the service of His sanctuary — if He has vouchsafed to call thee, like Mary, to be no more busied with many worldly things, but to wait in silence for His teaching, at the great Master's feet, how important is it to thee not to neglect the peculiar means of grace afforded thee, not to undervalue the part He has assigned thee—not to fall short of the superior degree of holiness and happiness, to which His mercy invites thee.

To this end it is necessary, not only to receive the foundation of faith ; but having received it, to abide in it, and to be built up thereon ; to follow the apostle's advice, jealously examining and proving our ourselves, whether we really be in the faith.

The manner of this proof, the scriptures tell us, is twofold. “ Christ is IN *you*,” says the apostle, “ *except ye be reprobate ;*” and our Lord himself de-



clares, “*By their FRUITS shall ye know them.*” “*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*”

It therefore appears, my dear sisters, that if we would preserve the grace vouchsafed to us at our religious vocation; if we would, when “*the bridegroom comes,*” be found amongst those wise virgins, who not merely once lighted the lamps of profession; but were careful by a constant supply of the oil of grace, to maintain the flame; we should studiously examine our internal heart as to the ground of its hopes, the bent of its desires, and the constancy of its communion with the only source of all grace; and we should equally see that we *receive not the grace of God in vain*, by diligent examination of our external walk, and conversation.

At the last awful and irrevocable day, the great Father of Spirits will equally condemn those, who *taught in His name*, and who *did many wonderful works*, but whose heart did not abide in Him by a fervent and living faith; and those who professing that fervent faith, yet neglected to manifest its reality, by corresponding good works.

This little treatise was written to assist you, my dear sisters, in making this examination.

At first, it was intended only to exhibit as a pattern, the outward walk of a PERFECT RELIGIOUS; but on consideration, it seemed advisable under each head, to oppose to it the character of an IMPERFECT one;

that the difference between them might more plainly appear.

By the term RELIGIOUS as applied to both these characters, it is meant to denote two characters who have *each* made a religious profession. Two persons who have each, in their measure, been made partakers of divine grace, and who have each desired to renounce the world and its vanities, and to journey to *that city which alone hath foundations*. Both are supposed to have been made sensible of the corruption of their own hearts; both, by a living faith, to have not only felt their need of a divine Saviour, but to have received that Saviour, as the only atoning sacrifice; and both are supposed to have received His peace into their hearts, and to have acknowledged His Spirit as the guide of their future course. In addition to which it is also supposed, that each, under these impressions of grace, has voluntarily and with real sincerity of intention, withdrawn from the world; with an unfeigned desire of dedicating herself more unreservedly to Christ, and walking in the narrow path of a strict religious rule, to which she has devoted her life.

Both these characters being partakers of Christian grace within; and both having by an open profession renounced the world without; they are both in this little manual designated by the term RELIGIOUS. But the first set of examples repre-

sents a person who having a single eye, "*walks wisely in the perfect way;*" whereas the second exhibits one, whose eye is not equally single, and who therefore, though in the main desiring to look the same way, is yet practically, if not halting between two opinions, yet in a great measure trying to serve two masters.

Both are supposed to be sincere; but the one is supposed to be *altogether*, the other only *partially* devoted to GOD.

Perhaps, however, it may be necessary here to explain that by the term PERFECT *religious* is not to be understood an *absolute perfection*, which would be vainly sought on earth; but according to the Hebrew sense of the word  $\square\eta$  a religious of a *perfect* or *undivided* will; whose desire it is to follow GOD altogether, and without reserve, without lowering the Christian standard. By the *imperfect religious* is understood a person of a sincere, but of a divided will; a person who truly wishes in a low measure to follow Christ; one who would feel horror at the bare idea of turning her back upon Zion; but one who is yet occupied, not solely by her journey's end, but whose eye is diverted by many of the attractions occurring in the intervening road. Hence she sometimes stands still, always allows herself to loiter, and mostly distracts her mind by amusing herself with the passing objects she meets; being quite

content, provided she be not manifestly out of the road, to follow at a very unequal pace, and at a very great distance.

Both are fields, whose preparation has been of GOD; and who have therefore not only received the good seed of the kingdom, but retained it. But the one, by dint of daily weeding, and dressing, and watering with the dews of heaven, brings forth fruit an hundred fold. In the other, whilst men slept, an enemy hath sown the field with tares; and though both have grown together, yet if it exhibits some apparently good fruit, it also teems with too many rough brambles and flaunting wild-flowers, fit only for the burning.

This little manual is not then addressed to those persons, who are so unhappy as to have cast off the fear of GOD, much less to those who have deliberately, and of set purpose trampled upon the blood of the covenant; and determinately quenched the Holy Spirit. These pages only address those who have true but weak faith; and who, not stirring up the gift that is in them, are in danger of losing it altogether. They address those who have indeed been truly grafted into the vine, but who not being careful assiduously to produce the good fruits of holiness, are in danger of being cut off from it, as withered branches. It is intended, not as an alarm to the ungodly, but as a warning to the negligent. To

admonish against that state of relaxation, into which Christians insensibly slide: who, without perceiving it, decline from vital to formal religion; who lose spirituality of mind and heart, whilst the understanding still retains the same opinions; and whilst the external profession nominally, and perhaps ostensibly, remains the same.

The character indeed here denominated the *PERFECT religious*, may, through the latent deceitfulness and corruption of the human heart, and the frailty and instability of nature, often fall into errors; but then she does not deliberately allow of them; and being surprised into them, she quickly turns from them to her Lord and Saviour for pardon and cleansing, in deep humiliation and self-abhorrence, well knowing that He alone is a Saviour, and that there is none other; and that of her own self she can do nothing.

The *IMPERFECT religious* on the contrary, often both gladly *hears* the word of truth, and even *does* many things. Nay, where no temptations arise to allure her affections, and distract her heart, she is even susceptible at times of warm devotional feelings, and of exerting herself in many cases in the service of GOD with zeal and fervour. But her heart not being solely devoted to GOD, and having many subordinate objects besides Him her principal end, she continually allows herself in a divided heart. She

permits the Canaanites of the land to establish their habitation in her borders; and though she would curb their absolute *dominion*, she yet compromises, by paying them a *heavy tribute*: she allows herself in a multitude of pursuits, which carry within them the principle of a departure from GOD. She does not resolutely close her gates; and hence the first temptation which presents itself, finds liberty to enter: and opportunity is no sooner afforded, than she falls by her inordinate affection to lawful things.

Nor can she ever be delivered from the dominion of sin, till she *feels* as well as *says* that “one thing alone is needful.” Till she in truth renounces as ENDS, *lawful* things, as completely as *unlawful* things; and until she in reality abandons all as objects of an independent attachment, to become in truth the disciple of Christ; and unreservedly to consecrate her body, soul, and spirit to Him, as a continual and living sacrifice.

It is the object of these pages, not to dwell so much on the external measure of each particular duty, which the PERFECT *religious* is called to practise; as upon the internal disposition of heart and soul, by which that measure should be determined. The PERFECT *religious* is not merely called to this, or to that particular duty, but to that disposition of heart, by which she may be ever ready for *all* to which it may please her heavenly Father to call her.



The PERFECT *religious* does not confine her view to the one great act of visible renunciation of the world, its interests, its dissipations, and its cares; but the solemn vow which she has pronounced with her lips as to the world *without*, she considers as a sacred pledge of the sincerity with which her heart binds itself to a continual renunciation of the far more dangerous world *within*.

As on her first conversion, her lips said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Speak, Lord, thine handmaid heareth;" so this impression is not a transient emotion, but an abiding sentiment. A seed deeply rooted and grounded in her heart, whose fibres strike deeper every day: intertwining themselves with every thought and feeling, and penetrating her inmost soul; till shooting and growing upwards also, its ramifications extend themselves through her whole life; like a tree planted by the still waters, whose leaf is ever green, and which continually produces a rich variety of fruits, each in its due season. The PERFECT RELIGIOUS counts the cost, before she begins to build. She well knows, that the true and entire dedication of heart, which flows from an entire and undoubting faith, can be the alone root and foundation, whence good works can spring; according to the declaration of our Lord, that "the tree is known by its fruit;" and that the *tree must be made good, before the fruit* can possibly become so.



It must not be imagined that it is too severe a requisition, to demand this unwavering integrity of faith, and of intention.

As Christianity can give no more ; so it will accept no less.

St. Paul describes the very foundation of all real religion, to consist in an undoubting faith, first, “*that GOD is,*” and secondly, “*that He is in truth a Rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.*” Now as is the strength or weakness, or the natural or the spiritual conviction of this truth ; so will be the vigour or feebleness, the superficiality or the depth of intention and purpose, by which the soul desires His favour ; seeks the light of His countenance ; hearkens to His voice ; and dedicates herself to the service of “*that King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible*” in whose hand is the breath of every creature ; who is *the Father of all spirits* ; with whom is the preparation of every heart ; and who is the unspeakable, unsearchable, unfailing, and eternal Reward, of all who walk before Him in Abraham’s faith, and in Abraham’s love.

## NO. II.

## CHAP. I. — ESTEEM FOR GOD.

## SECT. I. — PERFECT RELIGIOUS.

THE device of the perfect religious is that of St. Paul, “*I am Christ’s.*” His by creation, His by redemption, His by adoption; and His too by a deliberate choice, and voluntary self-dedication of mind, of heart, of soul, and of spirit.

To *Him* therefore she is sensible, she owes a full and unqualified obedience. To *His* will, she looks as her law; to His voice, she listens as to her guide; and His favour and salvation, she alone trusts in as her shield, and desires, as her exceeding great reward. Him she regards with the profound reverence due to the sovereign Creator; Him she adores as the object of her supreme love, who first loved her, and gave Himself for her. To His stripes, she looks for healing; on His all-sufficient sacrifice she depends for mercy and a perpetual atonement as her great Redeemer; and on the teachings of His Spirit does she wait continually in the secret of her heart, as the eyes of an handmaid on her mistress, for guidance.

She knows the voice of the Spirit as a convincer of sin, a reprovcr, and a comforter. He first taught her heart to call Jesus Lord; to His still small voice of truth and holiness she attentively listens as her progressive guide into all truth. Thus she may be said to carry about with her, an experimental sense of the verity of the Triune Jehovah. GOD is continually before the eyes of her heart — the Christian GOD—He who reveals Himself not only as the Almighty Creator and universal Father, but as the Man of Sorrows, and the Prince of Peace; and as the Wonderful, the Counsellor, *the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*; that Great Light, which whosoever followeth, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life; and which whosoever looks at with a single eye, his whole body shall be full of light.

She who has thus set GOD before her eyes, will of a truth prefer Him before all things. All creatures will become to her, as though they were not, as to any final and independent place in her affections. So that she may truly address the Lord in the language of the inspired psalmist, "*Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.*"

When GOD first vouchsafed to speak to her heart by His grace; it answered through the same grace, "*Here am I, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*"

*Speak, Lord, Thine handmaid heareth.*" Assuredly believing that she had henceforth no other business on earth, but to listen to His Word, and execute His will. That holy will which He reveals to His children, not necessarily by miraculous interpositions, but by the testimony of His written word; the internal voice of His abiding Spirit; and the ordering of His providence, in the circumstances in which He has placed her.

And because these are the triple voice by which it has pleased the universal Father to make known His will to His frail creature man, she assiduously applies herself to study and understand the first; to listen with fidelity to the second; and faithfully and cheerfully to conform herself to them all.

Having in obedience to the will of GOD chosen the religious society and family in the Good Shepherd's vast fold, in which she apprehends she is called to abide; she thenceforth considers its rules, as the manifestation of GOD'S will concerning her, even in the little details of life. Having embraced her order, and the peculiar post and office she there fills, through obedience to divine requirings, she looks upon all the regulations and duties attached to them, though ever so apparently unimportant, as appointed for her by GOD Himself, and she therefore endeavours cordially to submit herself to them all; fulfilling the most minute, with fidelity to

Him ; and aiming rather, at assiduously scrupulous fidelity in the common path she finds established, than at hastily chalking out an extraordinary one, from the fervour of nature and imagination.

True religion, and true humility, are known rather by very uncommon faithfulness in executing common duties ; than by choosing an eccentric way, and ill maintaining it.

Poverty of spirit, is much more evinced by a cordial conviction that we are only equal to the common path, in which it has pleased Infinite Wisdom and Love to place us, than in that inflated and false notion of our own strength, which deludes us to adopt a course far beyond our real calling.

The perfect religious having chosen her part in a reverend fear of GOD, and after waiting upon Him to teach her where He would have her to be ; does not willingly cavil at petty human imperfections, either in the religious service of the society which she has entered, or in the duties of her post, the requisitions of her superiors, the conduct of her associates, or the regulations of her order. Having consulted the Divine Counsellor in the choice of her habitation, she considers the advantages and disadvantages, the goods and evils, the temptations and the helps, arising out of them, as the particular appointment of Providence, respecting her. Hence she faithfully submits herself to the yoke, and cheer-

fully takes up the cross, even in the least things; applying herself to use them with fidelity, and to wait upon GOD to renew her strength, and to supply her with that grace, which will enable her to profit, not only by the helps, but by the temptations, hindrances, and difficulties, by which, in His appointment, He has seen it meet that her faith should be tried. On this account it is, that although she prefers waiting immediately upon GOD, to any other thing in the world, and although there is no *pleasure* she would not immediately sacrifice, to spend the time in His holy sanctuary; yet she does not repine, when illness, or other duties allow her but a short time for prayer, or permit her, for a time, less frequently to attend the divine service. She is thoroughly convinced, that the Lord to whom she has fully committed herself, is indeed a *faithful Creator*; and hence she feels fully satisfied, that His wisdom best knows, when to appoint her times, whether to *speak to Him*, or to *work for Him*, whether to go forth from His presence among men, or to return to His immediate presence, and wait in the silence of all flesh, for His holy teaching.

## SECT. II. — IMPERFECT RELIGIOUS.

THE grand source of all the errors of the *imperfect religious*, is A DIVIDED HEART.

She does not indeed willingly indulge in sinful desires; but she allows herself lawful desires as objects of attachment. Hence whilst she faintly wishes for GOD, she has many other objects of attachment; and whilst she would deprecate incurring His heavy displeasure, she has very many other dreads, beside displeasing Him. She in word, and in superficial feeling, acknowledges GOD, as the sole author of every good and perfect gift: but she suffers her natural affections to become so absorbed in the gifts, as often to draw them wholly aside from the Giver.

Thus her affection for divine things is like a delicate plant, close to which many weeds and wild flowers have taken root; they do not perhaps appear by any means of a poisonous nature; yet they gradually, but effectually draw away the moisture; rendering it weakly and languishing, and as *they* gain strength, they often overtop and smother it.

The IMPERFECT RELIGIOUS, would not indeed willingly, run immediately counter to the letter of the divine commandments, and rush into known sin, as the horse to the battle; but then she cannot always say in the sincerity of her heart, "*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.*" On the contrary, she dreads entering too closely into an examination of her own heart, or waiting to listen too attentively to the still small



voice of the divine witness; lest her conscience should become disturbed, and lest hearing it too distinctly, she should feel compelled to give up some portion of her creaturely attachment to objects which, she wishes to flatter herself, are lawful, and be obliged to increase in zeal and diligence, where she is remiss; or to take up some cross, to which she is indisposed.

Thus the variety of objects of complacency in which she indulges herself as ends, become the fruitful means of really distracting and dissipating her heart from GOD, her final good. Oftentimes indeed, she attends with real fervour and pleasure the preaching of the word, the reading of the Scriptures, or the Holy Sacrament, but then it is not from the fulness of one permanently abiding sentiment and established affection of the heart. The love of GOD, only takes its turn amongst her other loves. The omnipotent, and holy, and ever-blessed Creator, is placed on the same rank with the frail creatures, the works of His hand, which alternately occupy her. Thus, whilst she wishes, with a vague and general intention, on the whole, to serve GOD, she is in fact so often dissipated, by what are indeed in themselves lawful objects, that she *really* lives, half her time, a practical atheist, without GOD in the world. She may be compared to a person, whose habitual existence is passed in a deep lethargy, with a few occa-

sional gaspings to inhale the breath of heaven — a few momentary awakenings to light and life.

The imperfect religious accustoms herself to consider some things as lawful, and others as unlawful; but she forgets, that all become unlawful which are not done to GOD, and that, *whether we eat, or whether we drink, all is to be done to His glory*; so that the most necessary actions, and the most urgent duties, if we forget Him, only become a means of dissipating the heart, and of more effectually deadening the conscience.

Hence though she may be said frequently to *visit* GOD; she can never be said, *abidingly to dwell* with Him.

She indeed follows the routine, and established rules, of the religious society to which she belongs. With them she attends divine worship and sacred ordinances, with them she adopts unworldly language, and in common with them too, she assumes a religious dress. But she forgets, that the *common* rules of a religious society are established for persons, called to walk *not* in a *common* or *low* spiritual path. To enter that society, she made profession of a highly spiritual vocation, and when her negligence has suffered that holy spirit of faith by which she made profession, to be in a measure quenched, whilst she vainly imagines she does well in conforming to the letter of her rule, she is in *reality*, lying to the Holy

Spirit. The plainness of speech of her order, is a sacred pledge given by every individual adopting it, of that *truth in the inward parts* which should dwell within, and of the Christian simplicity of intention, godly sincerity, and guilelessness, which should characterise her intercourse with men. Her religious dress, though a silent, is yet a daily outward act of profession, that she aspires after a complete internal as well as external renunciation of the world and the things of the world. Her attendance seven times a day on the service of the Lord, is a declaration that it is *truly* and *unfeignedly* the desire of her heart, to wait upon Him in spirit, and in truth, in the secret of her soul. Her part in assemblies for the business of her order, is, in the eyes of GOD and man, a public profession, that it is her wish to conduct all her external concerns, as in the presence of her Lord, under His immediate guidance, and by the pure and holy light of His Spirit. Her constant attendance upon the Holy Sacrament, is a solemn declaration that her heart is deeply penetrated by His dying love; that she is, through the convictions of His Spirit, thoroughly penitent for her sins; and that with unfeigned compunction and contrition of heart, she proposes, by a closer communion with Christ, and more attentive listening to His divine teaching, to lead a new life, more purified within, and more abundant in good fruits without. Nor is that holy

communion, less a profession, that she is in true charity with all men — that she entertains a sisterly union with *all* for whom that sacred blood was shed, and for whom that holy water of cleansing and regeneration was poured forth — and that she earnestly desires that Christian charity, which unfeignedly bears both the souls and the temporal concerns of our neighbour in truth, and by a lively affection within the heart.

Thus whilst the imperfect religious, vainly flatters herself she is in safety, because she does not openly abandon her rule, she is inwardly an abomination to GOD, for drawing near to Him with her *lips*, and by an *outward* profession, whilst it gives her *no concern*, that her *heart*, is really far removed from Him.

She, indeed, observes and copies the usages established amongst the excellent in her society, and she vainly flatters herself, because her dress, her address, her attendance on worship, and on chapters of business, exhibit a FORM in common with theirs, that she is like them; forgetting that GOD looks upon the *heart*; and that, whilst she is anxious to preserve the religious forms of her order, she ought to bestow a doubly strict scrutiny on the yet far more important inquiry, whether she lives in the enjoyment and exercise of that grace, which in her own individual case, renders those acts of outward profession, a *true* and *genuine type* of her interior.

## No. III.

## CHAP. II. — SUBMISSION TO GOD.

## SECT. I. — PERFECT RELIGIOUS.

THE perfect religious truly loves GOD. Her adherence of heart is really to Him, and to Him only.

This being the case, her pleasure, even in religious exercises, is a fruit of her love to Him, and is therefore really kept in subordination to His will.

She desires that the love of GOD may really be the spring of all her actions. She therefore loves her religious exercises for GOD. Hence her love for them is not a superstitious love. She knows that where two or three are met together, Christ will not be in the midst of them, if they are met in their own name, instead of in His. Ordinances can never be blessed, unless GOD blesses them. In His favour is life, in the light of His countenance alone can we see light, and at His right hand only are rivers of joy and pleasures for evermore: nor will our heavenly Father ever bless religious ordinances

to us, when we go in our own will, to the neglect of other duties to which His holy will has manifestly called us.

The perfect religious is therefore disposed by a real principle of humility and submission to suffer the deprivation of religious ordinances, when GOD, by illness, or any other manifest duty, or accident, interdicts her from enjoying them, knowing that obedience is better than sacrifice, and that His wisdom will appoint her path better than her own shortsightedness. She knows that His holy and loving presence fills heaven and earth, and that the abundant riches of His goodness replenish the wants of every living soul, and that therefore she never can be sent empty away, whilst she abides in Him and Him alone who is her fulness. Nor can she ever be separated from Him whilst her soul truly waits upon Him, and whilst she in truth listens to His voice and obeys His requirings, as implicitly and submissively in that which she refrains from doing, as in that which she does.

An heartfelt submission to a privation so severe, is often a more unequivocal mark that the soul seeks after the will of GOD in spirit and in truth, than the most ardently zealous practice of every external exercise of piety. Nay, she will even profit by the state of interior desolation, darkness, and heaviness, in which it pleases Infinite Wisdom sometimes to

leave her. The prophet Isaiah has said, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his GOD." St. Peter, too, describes those who are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation, as being frequently, for a season, in heaviness through manifold temptations for the trial of their faith. Hence, the perfect religious, instead of being dismayed at such times, looks upon them as seasons vouchsafed by the Lord for self-examination; that she may try her own heart to its very ground, and see whether or not she follows Him from spiritual selfishness—whether it be GOD, or the consolations of GOD, she follows—whether she loves Him, or only loves the spiritual blessings He has bestowed on her; whether the main object of her pursuit has been the benedictions of GOD, or the great GOD Himself of all benedictions.

It is neither temporal pleasure, nor even spiritual pleasure, which ought to be the object of our attachment, but GOD Himself. For so long as it is merely enjoyment which we seek, whether temporal or spiritual—though the latter be of a far more elevated nature than the former—it is still ourselves and not GOD that we seek. It is the creature and not the Creator, since whilst we seem to desire Him,



we only seek Him as a means whereby to enjoy ourselves, thus placing ourselves above Him.

The proof that our final attachment is to GOD, and not to the sweetness we find in spiritual exercises, appears by our practising them with the same fidelity, and the same adhesion of will, when deprived of all sensible comfort, as when they are accompanied by the most lively spiritual enjoyment. The perfect religious is really rooted and grounded, not in frames and feelings, but in the faith once delivered to the saints, and in the love of GOD. When therefore she walks in darkness, and has no light; she truly trusts in the name of the Lord, and His word, like a lamp in that darkness, shows her, step by step, whither her feet should tend. And this conviction of faith is so solidly grounded upon the rock of ages, that she can truly say with the afflicted prophet Job, "though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

It is not indeed that she does not most ardently desire the light of the Lord's countenance. Her soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning, but then her soul doth *patiently wait* for Him; on His word does she hope, and His name and His sure word of promise so establish her heart, that she is enabled to trust without wavering upon His effectual assistance, even though deprived of the consolations of His sensible presence.

Hence if the Lord should not see it meet immediately to answer her ardent desire, the solidity of faith and the reality of grace preserve her heart fixed and grounded in peace, though stripped of sensible consolation, and though her affliction may be very grievous to her. Nay, as all things shall work together for the good of those who truly love GOD, so this state of darkness and deprivation will, under the divine blessing, dispose her with renewed humility to receive the cordial of divine consolation, having experienced of a truth that they are gifts wholly gratuitous on the part of GOD, that without Him she can do nothing, and that unless the Sun of Righteousness arise upon her with healing in His beams, she is only like a desert land which can of itself produce nothing, without being daily watered by the dew from heaven, and renovated by the sun, the source of life and light.

The perfect religious desires to wait continually upon GOD, deeply sensible that in her dwelleth no good thing, and that every good and perfect gift must come down from above, but then she waits upon Him, not so much that He may replenish her with that theoretic knowledge of divine truths, which may enable her to discuss them, as that He may impart to her the detailed knowledge, step by step, of the particular path in which He would have her to walk. She knows that those who really have

the Spirit should be careful to maintain a daily walk in the Spirit. She therefore waits; and even on sacred subjects she carefully endeavours to restrain all merely natural curiosity: she truly feels herself mortally diseased; she desires above all to be healed; she knows herself to be sinful; she desires to be cleansed; she is then careful that her desire for instruction be always with a view to real obedience. She knows that as the name of GOD may be taken in vain by word of mouth, *so may that holy name be taken in vain by unsuitable thoughts and imaginations in the heart*, and His commandment may thus be transgressed in the secret of the soul, even whilst the lips are sealed; and she is deeply convinced, that all thoughts and imaginations of GOD come under that denomination, which are fostered as an entertainment to a speculative, or busy and irreverend curiosity, instead of prostrating the soul before Him in humble adoration, or yielding the homage of implicit obedience. If the perfect religious seeks the knowledge of GOD above all things, she may be said, in one sense, to fear it above all things. *Knowing that for every degree of the knowledge of GOD she receives in the day of grace, He will demand a corresponding fruit in the day of judgment.* She therefore continually examines, with a holy jealousy, what is the disposition of heart she brings to spiritual reading. She takes heed not only that she

hears, and what she hears, but especially likewise *how* she hears.

She waits upon Him at every step, that He may not only enlighten her darkness, but renew her fervour, and sustain her strength. She sits in silence at His feet, not only to learn the knowledge of His truth, but that He may vouchsafe to inspire her heart with the unfeigned love of it.

She is assiduous in her attachment to spiritual reading, especially to that of the holy Scriptures, as the book published by GOD Himself, and whose contents, like their Great Author, consist of truth without any mixture of error. She also diligently assists at every means of instruction in divine things, and she desires to attend them with all the attention of which she is capable, and in a spirit of prayer. Nevertheless she attends without superstitiously attaching herself to them. She well knows, that unless the Great Author Himself explain His book to the heart, even the written word of truth will not avail. Unless the Lamb Himself break the seal, the book cannot be opened unto her; unless the Root and Offspring of David—He who has the key of David—unlock her heart, the most holy truth will find no entrance. Hence those outward practices of devotion in which she is most assiduous she does not rely upon, but rather passes through them to rest in the secret of her soul on Him alone who is the true Prophet,

Priest, and King of her church; knowing that those alone are blessed, who, hearing His sayings, abidingly keep them.

She fears lest she should delude herself by mistaking the occupation of the mind about religion, for the submission of the heart to religion. She knows that if a curse attends the avaricious heaping up of temporal riches without using them, a still heavier curse attends the laying up in a napkin the talent of spiritual wealth. She therefore seeks spiritually, as well as temporally, not so much to build barns and store-houses to heap up the abundance of her goods, as to look up to her Heavenly Father for that daily bread which may, day by day, renew her own soul in life, and supply the necessities of those whom His providence, from day to day, sends to her.

All that she desires, is to have an experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ, and of Him crucified; known not by theory, but by experience; for it is only by the teaching of the Spirit, that we can call Him Lord, and it is only with the heart that we can believe unto righteousness. Hence she rather fears than desires that knowledge of divine truths, which tends to furnishing the understanding, without regulating the heart. Knowledge, says the apostle, *puffeth up*, but charity *edifieth*.

Moreover whether the Lord gladdens her heart by

lifting upon her the light of His countenance, or whether she is in sadness and heaviness from His withdrawing it; in either case the foundation of her faith is the same, and she submits alike to the divine dispensation with true resignation of heart.

## SECT. II. — IMPERFECT RELIGIOUS.

ALTHOUGH the imperfect religious is far from possessing a permanent sense of the value either of spiritual instruction or of religious opportunities, and hence not unfrequently attends them with disgust, and oftener still with negligent indifference, yet it also frequently happens that she assists at them with fervour, because she has experienced spiritual sweetness and comfort in attending them.

At such seasons she suffers her heart to attach itself to them as an end. She becomes discontented when other duties deprive her of a continual attendance upon them, and she places her desire upon this sensible comfort, instead of upon submission to the will of GOD, who bestows satisfaction and joy, or withdraws them in whatever manner, and at whatever seasons, He sees best.

If in addition to any hindrance in attending divine ordinances, GOD also withdraws His sensible comforts from her soul, she then becomes perplexed, and no longer knows where to betake herself, or whither to look. The very ground of her hope seems to fail

her, and GOD becomes as it were, inaccessible to her, because she was accustomed to seek Him through the medium of frames and feelings, which continually fluctuate, instead of upon the firm ground of faith, which is immutable. Hence she falls into great weakness and discouragement, if not into despair, as though she had lost everything, although in reality GOD remains to her, as entirely as before, nay, He may be said to be hers in a more perfect and holy manner, since it is without any foreign mixture of her own self-complacency, if she were but sufficiently spiritually-minded to discern and to appreciate it.

When in this state of desolation, no longer finding any pleasure in spiritual things, she drags herself unwillingly to all her religious observances, as though to pay an unwilling debt, and as though they became useless as soon as they no longer contributed to her pleasure. Yet, in fact, they are perhaps then most useful, because most humbling. And it is, perhaps, in especial mercy that He has withdrawn the sunshine of His countenance, for the very purpose of discovering to her conscience the subtle self-love and self-complacency which was mingled with her dedication to Him. The very lesson, which His love sets before her is to teach her to prove the inmost ground and intention of her heart, by discovering to her that she had hitherto been, step by step, following GOD for her own pleasure, not from unmingled adoration of His



holiness, or unfeigned obedience to his will, abstracted from spiritually selfish ends; GOD, therefore, in very faithfulness, is willing to deliver her from this delusion, by discovering to her the ground of her heart, and teaching her to follow Him from dedication to Him only.

The imperfect religious earnestly desires that the Lord may soon restore to her the light of His countenance, but she does not, in the meantime, examine her own heart, and pray to Him, and wait before Him, until He be pleased to discover unto her wherefore He has withdrawn it. She does not take to heart His chastisement, and earnestly desire that the dew of His Spirit should so fructify it, as to cause it to bring forth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. She only views it as so much lost time, and thus, unconsciously to herself, despises the chastening of the Lord. Hence, not regarding it as His message to her soul, far from seeking to listen to it with reverence, and humble herself under His mighty hand, she only struggles impatiently to free herself from this disagreeable state, and to induce another less humiliating. This she vainly imagines she can effect by her own industry, not recollecting that the Spirit of GOD alone can be the true Comforter. Nor will He ever become the Comforter of that soul which is unwilling fully to submit to His holy and purifying visitings, as the Convincer of sin.

She is not aware that it is impossible to find peace, but in that in which GOD has placed it. It is neither inherent in ordinances, in reading, in prayer, nor in meditation ; but in unfeigned and unreserved submission of heart and soul to the conduct of GOD over us, so that we may from the very ground of the mind, adopt the language that, “whether we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.”

Christ, the all-sufficient Saviour, is no less faithful, as to what He does *in us*, than what He does *for*, his people. No sooner has His disciple received His free justification, than His Spirit in equal faithfulness carries on the work of sanctification. He therefore in mercy bestows those successive discoveries and corrections of sin which can never be removed but by either quenching the light of His Spirit by an awful apostasy, or by opening the eyes of our heart to the blessed influx of His heavenly light, and purifying our heart by an operative faith on Him who is equally made unto us wisdom, sanctification, and redemption.

The imperfect religious has not considered this ; she is therefore truly distressed at her desolate state ; much, because she thinks she has made shipwreck of the faith ; more, perhaps, at the loss of that self-complacency with which she previously flattered herself, and received the flattery of others on her spiritual attainments. She therefore makes all sorts of efforts

to remedy the barrenness and dryness of her soul. But her endeavours are made in her own will. Her expectation is from her own efforts. As though the will of man could effect the work of the Spirit of GOD.

Hence she ransacks all the good books she can by any means obtain, to fill her mind with a store of good thoughts, but their abundance does not profit her, because, whilst she busies herself with industry to hoard them, she forgets to seek the benediction of GOD — the dew from above which can alone cause them to fructify. Hence she reads spiritual works abundantly, but she scarcely ever waits on the Lord to listen to His voice in the secret of her soul. She forgets that it is not those who labour in the form of external observances, but those who in spirit and in truth wait on the Lord, who renew their strength: these only are they who shall mount with wings like the eagle, who shall run and not be weary, and who shall walk and not faint. She forgets that the end of all religious truth is its application by the Good Physician to the soul.

She, therefore, seeks out and reads with avidity all books of devotion, and collects the greatest variety and number. She also diligently seeks after all who are eminent, or at least celebrated for piety, and takes every means of being in their company and enjoying their conversation. She vainly imagines that when she shall have stored her mind with a clear

understanding, and have filled her memory with a capacious treasure of the truths of scripture, that she shall be truly religious. But, alas! she experiences, according to the declaration of scripture, that the increase of knowledge is often only the increase of sorrow. Being ignorant of this, she rather attaches herself to the knowledge, than to the obedience of the truth. Thus the very instruction which proves a blessing to others, becomes a real source of hindrance and of self-delusion to her. She has the misfortune rather to seek to know the truths of GOD because they are sublime, than to apply them because they are beneficial.

Hence she introduces into her soul the vice of curiosity, instead of inuring it to the virtue of obedience. She resembles a man who, though starving, should rather inquire curiously into the various recipes by which the viands placed before him were composed, instead of sitting down to renew his strength by actually partaking of them. Thus surrounded by plenty, her soul starves.

Whereas the perfect religious only wishes to know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, this unhappy nun wishes rather to be acquainted with all things else. Having never dug deep and become fully established on the right foundation, she is always learning many truths, yet is never able to come to the experimental knowledge of the one fundamental truth.

After a time the state of the imperfect religious becomes still worse. Finding her own efforts vain, she is tempted to give up all in despair. Not being brought to wait in humble silence before GOD, that she may renew her strength, and not being able to bear her desolate state, she seeks comfort from creatures to divert the sense of her sorrows; and thus her heart by degrees becomes dissipated and alienated from GOD.

When the imperfect religious sinks into this negligent state, she gives herself no trouble as to religious instruction, but vegetates on from day to day without ever thinking of stirring up the gift that may be in her. She settles down in a formal, heartless round of attendance at daily worship, reading, and the dress and language prescribed by the custom of her order, whilst all is desolate and barren within.

It may be truly said of this poor nun in the language of the prophet, "the land is desolate for want of knowledge," since in truth there is nothing so poor or so barren as the human soul, when destitute of the experimental knowledge of GOD.

## No. IV.

## CHAP. III. — ZEAL FOR THE HONOUR OF GOD.

## SECT. I. — PERFECT RELIGIOUS.

THE true happiness of the perfect religious consists in the honour of GOD. Her most pungent sorrow arises from the experience how little His divine plenitude of perfections and holiness affects His sinful and insensible creature, man.

As she loves GOD above all, so His interests are, in her estimation, above all other interests. The humiliations, injuries, or contumely, therefore, which she herself receives, inflict upon her no permanent sorrow. All the good she is favoured to dispense, she rejoices should be attributed not to her own natural disposition, or talents, but as the work and gift of His grace only; and that her fellow creatures should recognise it simply as a fresh proof of the great power and mercy of GOD. She bears thankfully in her heart the words of John the Baptist, “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

As mankind mostly live in awful forgetfulness of GOD, and all His mercies are commonly repaid with

insensibility and ingratitude; so the sins of the children of men pierce her heart with deep and genuine sorrow. She may truly say with David, "my zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten Thy words."—Psalm cxix. 139. She afflicts her soul, and refuses to be comforted. She mourns not only over the sins of the church, but over her own sins, and over the instability and frequent infidelities of her own heart, which should attach itself by a permanent adhesion to GOD its centre.

She knows she is called by His grace to fulfil the words of the prophet, "Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His face evermore."—Psalm cv. 6. Comparing herself with this holy standard, she is deeply humbled at her own short-comings; weighed in the pure and holy balance of the sanctuary, she feels herself to be utterly wanting, and she therefore prostrates herself in deep and unfeigned self-abasement and self-abhorrence, in the dust of humiliation at His feet. But because the same GOD who imparts to her the sense of her own nothingness and vileness, also vouchsafes to manifest His redeeming love to her soul, and the precious blood by which He hath blotted out her sins, and pardoned her iniquities; so though she remains deeply contrite, she is yet not utterly confounded. Nay she esteems this very humiliation a blessing, since GOD only imparts the



grace of living faith to those who have applied with fidelity, that of genuine repentance.

SECT. II. — IMPERFECT RELIGIOUS.

THE imperfect religious has very little zeal or even concern for the honour of GOD.

She imagines herself however to be zealous, because she often pursues religious occupations with great seeming fervour, and if she be a person of talent, both her imagination and understanding are often well stored with noble and affecting sentiments, and with just and frequently with brilliant thoughts on religious subjects.

In reality, however, this religious seeks her own honour, and not that of GOD. In proof of which, when others fall short, or remain in a state of lukewarmness, she rather feels a secret pleasure in comparing her own state with theirs, as though their deadness constituted a title, or at least corroborated her own title to acceptance, instead of feeling really grieved to the very soul, at seeing the holy and ever blessed GOD thus ignominiously dishonoured by His wretched creatures.

She would indeed feel the greatest self-abhorrence, did she even suspect herself to be in a state of insensibility towards GOD. Hence she assumes an appearance of zeal and fervour, which not only de-

ceives others, but deludes herself. For she is continually busied about good things, yet all her occupations, however useful they may be to others, profit her own soul nothing, because they are not grounded upon the heart-abasing sense that she can of her own self do nothing, and that in truth it belongs to GOD only either to pardon sin through His precious blood, or to purify the heart through the operation of His Holy Spirit.

All her multitude of devotional practices weaken instead of strengthening her, because they are furnished from the scanty pittance of her own fund, instead of being supported by a continual drawing from the inexhaustible treasury of GOD.

Little does it avail to read, to think, or to talk much of religious things, whilst destitute of that grace by which they are alone applied. In vain does she strive, by heaping up an accumulated multitude of ideas, reflections, and imaginations, to erect like the children of Babel a tower by which she may ascend to heaven, whilst she forgets with Elijah to wait until the fire from heaven itself shall descend to kindle the sacrifice.

The imperfect nun would be much surprised, were she told that she only renders to GOD a mere exterior worship, or the excited emotions of natural affection. Yet nothing is more true. For it is with the renewed heart man believeth unto righteousness.

Now the heart and the understanding are essentially different. That which enlightens the one by no means necessarily vivifies the other. Reason is the lamp of the one, grace the manna of the other. The unfortunate religious who substitutes the former for the latter, commits the same mistake as a patient who, prostrate on her sick bed, and opening her curtains to the noon day sun, should expect that the light which enables her to see her way, should also impart the strength to walk in it.

The imperfect religious, proceeding upon the radical error of looking to herself, and not to GOD, substitutes theological information for religious grace, doctrinal conversation for childlike obedience, and harsh censures of the erring, for that deep spiritual experience of her own heart, which with the sin of others, discovers the force of the temptation, and an ungodly self-complacence in her own superiority for that deep grief at their faults, which should lead her continually to bear them on her heart before GOD, and to pour out her soul in prayer for their immortal souls.

Indeed the harshness of her censures bears an exact proportion to the slenderness of her faith. She does not enjoy a deep and realising sense of the holiness and love of GOD, and her heart is not truly affected by the state of alienation and forgetfulness of man. She is not penetrated by an awful sense either of

the value of the soul or of eternity, therefore she does not from her very heart pity and yearn over those who are hastening to destruction. Nor does she experimentally know the deep disease of the human soul : she makes therefore no allowance for its weakness.

She falls into the same error respecting herself, and she measures the decency of her own walk against the licence of that of worldly persons, forgetting that she ought to consider the utmost wanderings of the unawakened, as small in comparison to the least deviation of a disciple, or the most secret sin against light and love in one who has a sense of the mercy of GOD in Christ, and who is under the teaching of His Holy Spirit. The carelessness of a supine and reckless world is as nothing compared to the deep ingratitude of allowed deviation in the children of God.

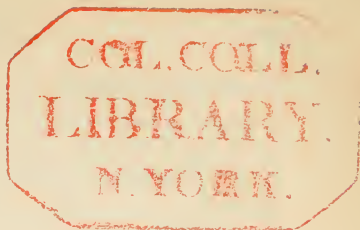
If, however, by any chance she is unavoidably forced into a reluctant comparison of her own course with that of the perfectly religious, she prudently stops at the comparison of their external walk, and shutting her eyes to the wide difference of the internal principle, she remains wholly insensible of her state ; considering her deficiency under each article as trivial, and but so little falling short, as to be scarcely worth observation. She sees that her defalcation outwardly is not notorious ; she flatters

herself that though not as strict as some, her deficiencies neither outwardly exclude her from the society of the religious, nor do they inwardly lead her into immediate profanity, nor do they arise from any manifestly malignant, profligate, or blasphemous passion. Hence she considers herself safe, never recollecting that the slightest defect in her outward actions is yet a certain symptom of the deep declension of the heart within; and that it is by the state and condition of the heart that GOD will judge the sons and daughters of men. In spiritual as in temporal sicknesses, the torpor of the palsy is no less dangerous than the raving of the fever which distorts the whole frame; the almost imperceptible spot of the plague token is no less fatal than the wide and gaping wound. And the Lord our GOD has solemnly declared that He will as assuredly spue out of His mouth the tepid Laodicean, who is neither hot nor cold, as that He will cast into the fiery lake the liar, the unbelieving, and the idolater.

A P P E N D I X.







## APPENDIX.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES, ETC.

#### ST. FRANCIS DE SALES.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES was a native of the diocese of Geneva. He was born in 1567, at the Château de Sales. The Count de Sales, his father, intended him for the law, in which his talent procured him great distinction. The early and deep piety of Francis soon led him to entertain other views. At the early age of eighteen he solemnly dedicated himself to the service of God, and determined to renounce all secular pursuits. He relinquished his title in favour of his brother; and entered himself into the Church, where his fervent piety soon rendered him conspicuous.

He was nominated Bishop and Prince of Geneva, in 1602. The piety of men of equally deep religion often assumes distinct characters, according to the peculiar service they are designed by God to render the Church. St. Francis de Sales holds one of the first

rank amongst enlightened mystics. The deep piety and spirituality which breathe throughout his works, is said by some, to have formed the early taste of Fénelon. It is certain that the archbishop of Cambrai was a great admirer of his writings. It forms a singular coincidence, that he was not only named after St. Francis, but bore so striking a resemblance, in every part of his character, to the bishop of Geneva.

St. Francis de Sales, at the express desire of the Duke of Savoy, had a long interview with Theodore Beza. They parted with mutual esteem ; but neither convinced the other.

St. Francis had formed a peculiar friendship with the Baroness de Chantal, a lady of deep piety, who had placed herself under his direction.

In 1610, he instituted a new religious society, entitled The Order of the Visitation. He placed his friend Madame de Chantal at the head of it.

St. Francis was universally beloved and respected. Cardinal Perron was used to say of him, "My arguments indeed convince heretics ; but his example alone converts them." This observation is similar to that which the Queen of Poland afterwards made on Bossuet and Fénelon. "Bossuet," said she, "convinces us of the truth of Christianity ; but Fénelon makes us love it."

The Princess Christina of France once presented the bishop with a very valuable diamond ring. She requested him to wear it as a testimony of her esteem. Above all, she desired him never to part with it. "Not," said he, "unless the poor should want it."

One day, his steward informed him that he had just gained a very important lawsuit. It had been instituted to recover the revenues of the bishopric, which some

persons in the diocese had unjustly and fraudulently seized upon.

The steward told him, he was about to make them refund to the utmost farthing; the sum being very considerable. "Faithfulness," returned St. Francis, "obliged me to begin a lawsuit, which involved the rights of my successor: Christian love obliges me to remit the demand, for the pleasure of winning the hearts this contest may have estranged."

He died 1622, after having led the life of an Irenæus, or a Polycarp.

His works have been the favourite companions of Christians of all denominations. The most celebrated are *Traité de l'Amour de Dieu*, 3 vols. 12mo., well abridged in one, by Tricalet. *Lettres Spirituelles*, 2 vols. folio. *Solide et Vraie Piété*, 1 vol. 12mo. His life is written by several authors. That by the Abbé Marsollier, 2 vols. 12mo., is most esteemed. It is well worth the perusal. The abridgment of his *Esprit*, one thick vol. 12mo., is also much valued. It is a scarce work, and is more esteemed than the original, which was written by his friend Camus, bishop of Bellay. This work, in 6 vols. 8vo., is wearisome, from its tedious and minute details. The life of Madame de Chantal, which is very interesting, is an almost indispensable accompaniment to that of St. Francis. It is likewise written by the Abbé Marsollier, in 2 vols. 12mo. Several other accounts of Madame de Chantal are indeed published, but this is the best.

## GRANDE CHARTREUSE.

THE Grande Chartreuse was burnt down a very few years after the date of Lancelot's visit there. It was however soon rebuilt.

The popular legend of Raymond Diocres seems to require some animadversion. First published by Gerson, it was in the middle ages currently received as a fact. It has been since immortalised by the pencil of Le Sueur, in his set of paintings for the Chartreuse. It was necessary to mention the story, therefore; although now generally abandoned as a legend. May it not however be, that modern incredulity is as much mistaken in wholly rejecting, as ancient superstition was in unreservedly admitting, this story? It is well known that complaints producing sudden seizures were not so well understood then as they have been since. The symptoms too of death were not so infallibly ascertained. It is also known that customs, both of almost immediate interment and of exposing the body in open coffins, or biers, were formerly very prevalent. These circumstances being combined, may it not be possible, that Raymond was really seized with some sort of fit, and that he might have been supposed dead? Might not the strong stimuli of lights and powerful music have roused him from his lethargy? If so, it does not appear impossible that an evil conscience and the horror of his situation might have extorted some exclamation, which the tradition of a few centuries has since manufactured into the legend related by Gerson. This, however, is offered as a mere conjecture. Possibly, the whole incident may be altogether fabulous.

It appears truly wonderful that such a legend should have been received, with an unqualified assent, near our own times. Peter Poiret does not scruple, in his life of Antoinetta Bourignon, to blame the Port Royal writers for having called in question its authenticity.

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### BELLARMIN.

ROBERT BELLARMIN was born at Monte Pulciano, in 1545. He was nephew to Pope Marcellus the Second. He entered the Society of Jesuits at eighteen. He did honour to their company by his deep piety, his extensive learning, and his brilliant talents. His abilities began to be developed at a very early age. So highly was he esteemed, that he was commissioned to preach, even before he entered into holy orders. In this respect he resembled Bossuet and Fénelon. They each delivered sermons in public before they attained the age of fifteen. Bossuet's discourse being pronounced at eleven o'clock at night, it was observed, that no sermon had ever before been preached either so early or so late.

Bellarmin entered the priesthood in 1569. He was consecrated by Cornelius Jansenius, bishop of Ghent. This Jansenius is not to be confounded with the bishop of Ypres. Bellarmin was then professor of theology at Louvain. His preaching was highly celebrated. Not only Catholics, but Protestants, continually thronged his church. They even came from England and Holland on purpose to hear him.

After seven years' residence in the Low Countries, Bel-

larmin returned to Italy. He was appointed professor of polemics by Gregory XIII. in the new college which he had just instituted. Sixtus V. afterwards raised him to the office of theologian to the French legate. Nine years afterwards, Clement VIII. created him cardinal. He received the purple in 1599. The Pope gave the following reason for bestowing the cardinal's hat on Bellarmin: "That he wished to have one man near his person, who at all times spoke the truth." He was afterwards made Archbishop of Capua, in 1601.

Bellarmin was equally conspicuous for piety and polemic ability.

He every year disposed of a third of his income in acts of charity. He visited the sick in hospitals, and the prisoners in the most loathsome gaols. The expedients to which he had recourse do equal honour to his charity and humility. When he saw persons in straitened circumstances, who might be wounded at receiving alms, he frequently retained them at a large salary, to distribute his charities to the poor. It appeared at his death that a very considerable number of persons of this description were employed by the cardinal.

They were each under the strictest injunctions, neither by mentioning his name, or otherwise, to afford the least clue by which he might be suspected as the author of the immense charities they were employed to administer.

Cardinal Bellarmin's benevolence appeared at all times the spontaneous result of a truly Christian heart.

He once gave his ring in pledge to relieve a distressed object. He happened to have no money about him at the moment. Bellarmin died, exhibiting the most profound humility, and the most fervent faith.

The controversial works of Cardinal Bellarmin may



be considered as the arsenal from which the Romish Church has derived her strongest weapons against Protestantism.

Nevertheless, the works of this great man are not, in all respects, to be adopted as a true criterion of the faith of that Church which he so ably defended.

His views of the supremacy of the Pope are widely different from the opinions entertained in the Romish Church. He is accused by Roman Catholic writers of insisting on the authority of the Pope, even in opposition to that of general councils. They have also accused him of extending the jurisdiction of the Papal see, from spirituals to temporals. He has been much blamed by Roman Catholic authors for entertaining and expressing sentiments, on this head, in direct opposition to those explicitly maintained by all the Catholic universities. Those indeed must be excepted which are under the immediate influence of the ultramontane opinions.

Bellarmin died in 1621. His works are numerous, and highly valued. His life was published in 1625, in octavo, by Fuligati. A French and Latin translation of this work appeared in 1626.

Protestants have been accused of spreading very false accounts respecting the latter end of this great and good man; for such, notwithstanding his prejudices and errors in judgment, he certainly was.

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### M. DE RANCÉ.

WHEN M. de Rancé began his reform, many little indications of his early character were mentioned. It was



asserted that, when a child, he spoke with enthusiasm of the hermits of Egypt. Whilst at Rome too, it was his favourite recreation to wander alone for hours, amidst the obscure and dreary regions of the catacombs.

The life of the Abbé de la Trappe is well worth reading, from its curiosity. Three accounts of him are published. One by Villefore, another by Meaupeaux, a third by Marsollier. The last two are the most esteemed. Meaupeaux's is thought the most eloquent; Marsollier's is esteemed the most correct. Meaupeaux is the panegyrist of his beloved and intimate friend; Marsollier the faithful historian of a character whom he represents as most eminent for piety, but yet not devoid of some harmless frailties, and many eccentricities more singular than needful.

The French say that Marsollier narrates the life, and Meaupeaux pronounces the funeral panegyric, of M. de Rancé. A fourth, written by Le Nain is, however, the best. Dom Armand de Rancé is the author of several valuable works. His chief publications are, *Lettres Spirituelles*, 2 vols. 12mo. *Sainteté des Etudes, et des devoirs Monastiques*, also 2 vols. 12mo. *Instructions Chrétiennes*, also in the same number of vols. *Réglemens de l'Abbaye, Notre Dame de la Trappe, et les Instructions donnés à Clairets*, 1 vol. 12mo. *Institutions de la Trappe. Vies de plusieurs Solitaires de la Trappe*.

There is much in these works highly edifying. They are all curious, inasmuch as they unfold the workings of a mind so singular.

The Abbé de la Trappe was not free from trials in his own convent. He was, like St. Paul, often tried by false brethren, who crept in unawares. His conduct on these occasions, with the account of his death, is truly

interesting to every Christian reader. He completed the century ; and expired, relying on the alone merits of his Saviour, in the year 1700.

The Abbé de Rancé's favourite books were, *The Imitation of Christ*, commonly ascribed to Thomas à Kempis. *The Lives of the Fathers of the Desert*, and Cardinal Bellarmin's *Art of Dying Well*.

#### ADDENDA ON THE INTERIOR OF LA TRAPPE.

IN 1765, the number of religious at La Trappe amounted to 69 monks, 56 lay brothers, and frères donnés. Silence is so strictly observed, that it is said, some of its inhabitants have died, rather than break it by asking for necessary assistance. The author of the précis adds, that this practice is grounded on the words "Sedebit solitarius et tacebit."

The cells are furnished with a small table, a straw chair, a wooden box without any lock, and two trestles, on which, at night, they lay the plank which supports their mattress.

Invalids are not allowed to keep their beds. In the most severe illnesses, they rise at three in the morning. Nor is it allowed even to lean against their chairs in the course of the day to rest.

M. de Nonancourt mentions a singular anecdote concerning La Trappe.

Two brothers had lived together in the monastery for twelve years, without knowing each other. The eldest being at the point of death, told the Rev. Father Abbé that he had but one subject of uneasiness ; which was,

that he had left an only brother immersed in the dissipations of the world. The Abbé immediately sent for him, and they embraced each other with the greatest affection just before he expired.

The cemetery of La Trappe is quite unadorned. In the centre is a small chapel, containing the monument of M. de Rancé. His figure is carved at full length in a recumbent posture. The graves of the brethren are without, in the burying-ground. They are marked by simple wooden crosses, inscribed with the names and ages of the persons.

When Count Rosenberg became a monk at La Trappe, he refused to see his own mother. The Chevalier Albergotti manifested the same inflexibility towards an intimate friend. This gentleman's affection was so strong, that he at length resolved to become himself a monk, in the same convent with his friend. Notwithstanding this prodigy of friendship, Albergotti never once lifted up his eyes upon him.

The death of Louis XIV. was not known at La Trappe for a very considerable space of time after it took place. It has been said, that it was not known for years, but by the Rev. Father Abbé.

It is said, on good authority, that a nobleman, having taken a journey of five hundred leagues, purposely to see La Trappe, could, in the neighbouring village, scarcely find one person who knew where it was situated.

This anecdote, as well as the difficulty of finding the path to La Trappe (a circumstance mentioned in every account of this monastery) appears very difficult to reconcile with other facts, also related in the same works. It is repeatedly said, that, on an average, this seclusion is visited by six thousand strangers every year; and that

from twelve to fifteen hundred poor are fed there, and otherwise relieved twice every week. It seems difficult to conceive how a road can be untracked, which is passed a hundred and sixty thousand times every year. The chant in use at La Trappe is the Gregorian, or plain chant.

#### JAMES THE SECOND'S VISIT TO LA TRAPPE.

AMONGST the most frequent visitors of La Trappe, was the unfortunate James the Second. An account of his first visit may, perhaps, prove not unacceptable to the English reader. It is given here, instead of being inserted in the text, because it took place some years subsequent to M. Lancelot's tour.

James the Second had heard of La Trappe in the days of his prosperity. After his misfortunes, he resolved to visit a seclusion he had so long felt a curiosity to see. This design was not executed till after his return from his unsuccessful expedition to Ireland.

He arrived at La Trappe in the evening of the 20th of November, 1690. As soon as M. de Rancé heard he was come, he went forth to meet him at the door of the monastery. The king was on horseback. As soon as he alighted, the abbé prostrated himself before him. This is the custom with respect to all strangers. Nevertheless, it was, in this instance, performed in a manner expressive of peculiar respect.

The king felt pain at seeing the abbé in this humiliating posture before him. He raised him up, and then entreated his benediction. This the abbé gave, accompanying it with a speech of some length. He assured his majesty he thought it a great honour to see a monarch

who was suffering for the sake of religion ; who had been compelled to abandon three kingdoms from circumstances originating in conscientious motives. He added, that the prayers of the whole community had been constantly offered up in his behalf. They had continually implored Heaven to afford him renewed strength, that he might press on in the power of God, till he should receive an eternal and immortal crown.

The king was then conducted to chapel. They afterwards conversed together for an hour. James joined in the evening service, by which he appeared much edified and consoled.

The king's supper was served by the monks, and consisted of roots, eggs, and vegetables. He seemed much pleased with all he saw. After supper, he went and looked at a collection of maxims of Christian conduct, which were framed and hung up against the wall ; he perused them several times, and, expressing how much he admired them, requested a copy.

Next day the king attended the chapel. He communicated with the monks ; this he did with great apparent devotion. He afterwards went to see the community at their labour for an hour and a half. Their occupations chiefly consist of ploughing, turning, basket-making, brewing, carpentry, washing, transcribing manuscripts, and bookbinding.

The king was much struck with their silence and recollection. He, however, asked the abbé, if he did not think they laboured too hard. M. de Rancé replied, "Sire, that which would be hard to those who seek pleasure, is easy to those who practise penitence."

In the afternoon the king walked for some time on a fine terrace, formed between the lakes surrounding the

monastery. The view from this place is peculiarly striking. He then went to visit a hermit, who lived by himself in a small hut, which he had constructed in the woods surrounding La Trappe. In this retreat he spent his time in prayer and in praise, remote from all intercourse with any one, excepting the Abbé de la Trappe. This gentleman was a person of rank; he had formerly been distinguished as one of the bravest officers in King James's army, On entering his cell, the king appeared much struck and affected with the entire change in his demeanour and expression of countenance.

In a short time he recovered himself. After a great variety of questions on the part of the king, he at length asked him, "at what hour in the morning he attended the service of the convent in winter?" He answered, "at about half-past three."

"But," returned Lord Dumbarton, who was in the king's suite, "surely that is impossible. How can you traverse this intricate forest in the dark; especially at a season of the year, when, even in the day time, the road must be undiscernible, from the frost and snow?"

"My Lord," replied the hermit, "I should blush to esteem these trifles as any inconveniences, in serving a heavenly monarch; when I have so often braved dangers so far more imminent, for the chance of serving an earthly prince."

"You are right," returned the king. "How wonderful that so much should be sacrificed to temporal potentates; whilst so little is endured in serving Him, the only King, immortal and invisible, to whom alone true honour and power belong—that GOD who has done so much for us!"



“Surely, however,” continued Lord Dumbarton to the hermit, “you must be thoroughly tired with passing all your time alone in this gloomy forest.

“No,” interposed the king; himself replying to the question, “he has indeed chosen a path widely different to that of the world. Death, which discovers all things, will shew that he has chosen the right one.”

The king paused for a reply. None being made, he continued: “There is a difference,” said he (turning to the hermit), “between you and the rest of mankind. You will die the death of the righteous, and you will rise at the resurrection of the just,—but they” . . . .

Here he paused; his eyes seemed full of tears, and his mind absent, as if intent on painful recollections.

After a few moments, he hastily arose, and taking a polite and kind leave of the gentleman, returned with his retinue to the monastery.

During his whole stay, the king assisted at all the offices. In all of them he manifested a deep and fervent devotion. His misfortunes seemed to have been the means of awakening his heart to worship GOD in spirit and in truth.

Next day the king prepared to depart at an early hour.

On taking leave, he threw himself at M. de Rancé’s feet, and with tears requested his parting benediction.

The Abbé bestowed it in a most solemn and affecting manner.

The king, on rising, recognised the monk on whose arm he leant to get up. He was a nobleman who had long served in his army (*the Hon. Robert Graham*). “Sir,” said the king, addressing himself to him, “I have never ceased to regret the generosity with which you made a



sacrifice of a splendid fortune in behalf of your king. I can, however, now grieve at it no longer; since I perceive that your misfortunes in the service of an earthly monarch, have proved the blessed means of your having devoted your heart to a heavenly one."

The king then mounted his horse and departed.

James the Second, from that period, repeated his visits to La Trappe annually.

On these occasions he always bore his part in the exercises of the community. He often assisted at the conferences of the monks, and spoke with much unction. It is said that the king's character appeared to undergo a strikingly perceptible, though a progressive, change.

He every year appeared to grow in piety and in grace; and he evidently increased in patience and in submission to the divine will.

In 1696, the queen accompanied the king to La Trappe. She was accommodated for three days with all her retinue, in a house adjoining the monastery, built for the reception of the commendatory abbots. She was much pleased with her visit, and expressed herself to be not less edified than the king.

Both of them entertained sentiments of the highest veneration for M. de Rancé. Their acquaintance, thus begun, was soon matured into a solid friendship.

They commenced a correspondence which was regularly maintained on both sides till M. de Rancé's death.

There is reason to believe that a very considerable change was wrought in the king's mind, in consequence of his intimacy with the Abbé de la Trappe. Whether this change amounted to that total renewal of heart spoken of by the apostle, there are, perhaps, not data sufficiently clear to ascertain.

The following are the terms in which the king expressed himself respecting M. de Rancé.

“I really think nothing has afforded me so much consolation since my misfortunes, as the conversation of that venerable saint, the Abbé de la Trappe. When I first arrived in France, I had but a very superficial view of religion; if, indeed, I might be said to have any thing deserving that name. The Abbé de la Trappe was the first person who gave me any solid instruction with respect to genuine Christianity.

“I formerly looked upon GOD as an omnipotent Creator, and an arbitrary governor. I knew His power to be irresistible. I therefore thought His decrees must be submitted to, because they could not be withstood. Now, my whole view is changed. The Abbé de la Trappe has taught me to consider this GOD as my Father; and to view myself as adopted into His family. I now can look upon myself as become His son, through the merits of my Saviour, applied to my heart by His Holy Spirit. I am now convinced, not only that we ought to receive misfortunes with patience, because they are inevitable; but I also feel assured, that death, which rends the veil from all things, will discover to us many new secrets of love and mercy in the economy of GOD’s providence, as in that of His grace. GOD, who gave up His Son to an accursed death for us, must surely have ordered all inferior things by the same spirit of love.”

Such were King James’s sentiments respecting M. de Rancé. The Abbé, on the other hand, entertained as high an opinion of him. The following passage concerning the unfortunate King of England, occurs in one of M. de la Trappe’s letters to a friend.

“I will now speak to you concerning the King of England. I never saw anything more striking than the whole of his conduct. Nor have I ever seen any person more elevated above the transitory objects of time and sense. His tranquillity and submission to the divine will are truly marvellous. He really equals some of the most holy men of old, if, indeed, he may not be rather said to surpass them.

“He has suffered the loss of three kingdoms; yet his equanimity and peace of mind are undisturbed. He speaks of his bitterest enemies without warmth. Nor does he ever indulge in those insinuations, which even good men are too apt to fall into, when speaking of their enemies. He knows the meaning of two texts of Scripture, which are too much neglected, ‘It is *given* you to suffer,’ and ‘Despise not the gift of GOD.’ He, therefore, praises GOD for every persecution and humiliation which he endures. He could not be in a more equable state of mind, even if he were in the meridian of temporal prosperity.

“His time is always judiciously and regularly appropriated. His day is filled up in so exact a manner, that nothing can be well either added to, or retrenched from his occupations.

“All his pursuits tend to the love of GOD and man. He appears uniformly to feel the divine presence. This is perhaps the first and most important step in the divine life. It is the foundation of all that follows.

“The Queen is in every respect influenced by the same holy desires.

“The union of these two excellent persons is founded on the love of GOD.

“It may be truly termed an holy and a sacred one.”

Such were M. de Rancé’s opinions of King James. It is impossible to doubt, but that the venerable Abbé la Trappe was sincere in his expressions. To the English reader they will, perhaps, cause surprise.

Whatever sacrifices may have been made to any system of faith, it will appear difficult to join the Abbé de la Trappe, in ascribing them to the genuine influence of religion, whilst the person said to have made them, authorised the decisions of a Jefferies, or the executions of a Kirk.

Nor will it probably be thought that James’s conduct respecting the Duke of Monmouth, can ever be reconciled with a profession of that religion, whose command it is, not to hide ourselves from our own flesh.

The Christian reader, however, will not, perhaps, draw so decisive a conclusion. Having himself experienced its blessed influence, he knows that the Divine Spirit can wholly and radically change the heart. He can take away the heart of stone, and bestow the heart of flesh. Old things may be wholly done away, and all things may become new. He knows too, that temporal misfortunes are often the method by which God, in mercy, inclines the human heart to listen to the voice of His Spirit. Nevertheless, where such a change really has taken place, it will be evidenced by corresponding fruits. A real dedication of heart to God must be evidenced by a devotion, not of forms and phraseology, but of heart and of life.

Many degrees of alteration may take place in the human heart; which yet may fall far short of a saving change.

Perhaps none is more common, because none is more cheap, than substituting a respect for religion and religious persons, in the place of an assiduous mortification of our own corruptions, a denying of ourselves, a taking up of the cross, and a zealously following of Christ.

It may be probable, as it is pleasing to have any reasons for entertaining the hope, that this great change actually did take place in the instance of the unfortunate James. A considerate Christian would, however, join in M. de Rancé's eulogium with more full assurance, had there been some more solid proofs of his conversion, than a friendship for the monks of La Trappe.

THE END.

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